LETTERS FROM EUROPE ANTHONY JOSHUA HAS BIG PLANS

E OF BOXING

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THE 84TH ANNUAL RING AWARDS ISSUE

FIGHTER OF THE YEAR

JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ SCORES A KNOCKOUT FOR THE AGES

WOMEN'S YEAR-END WINNERS

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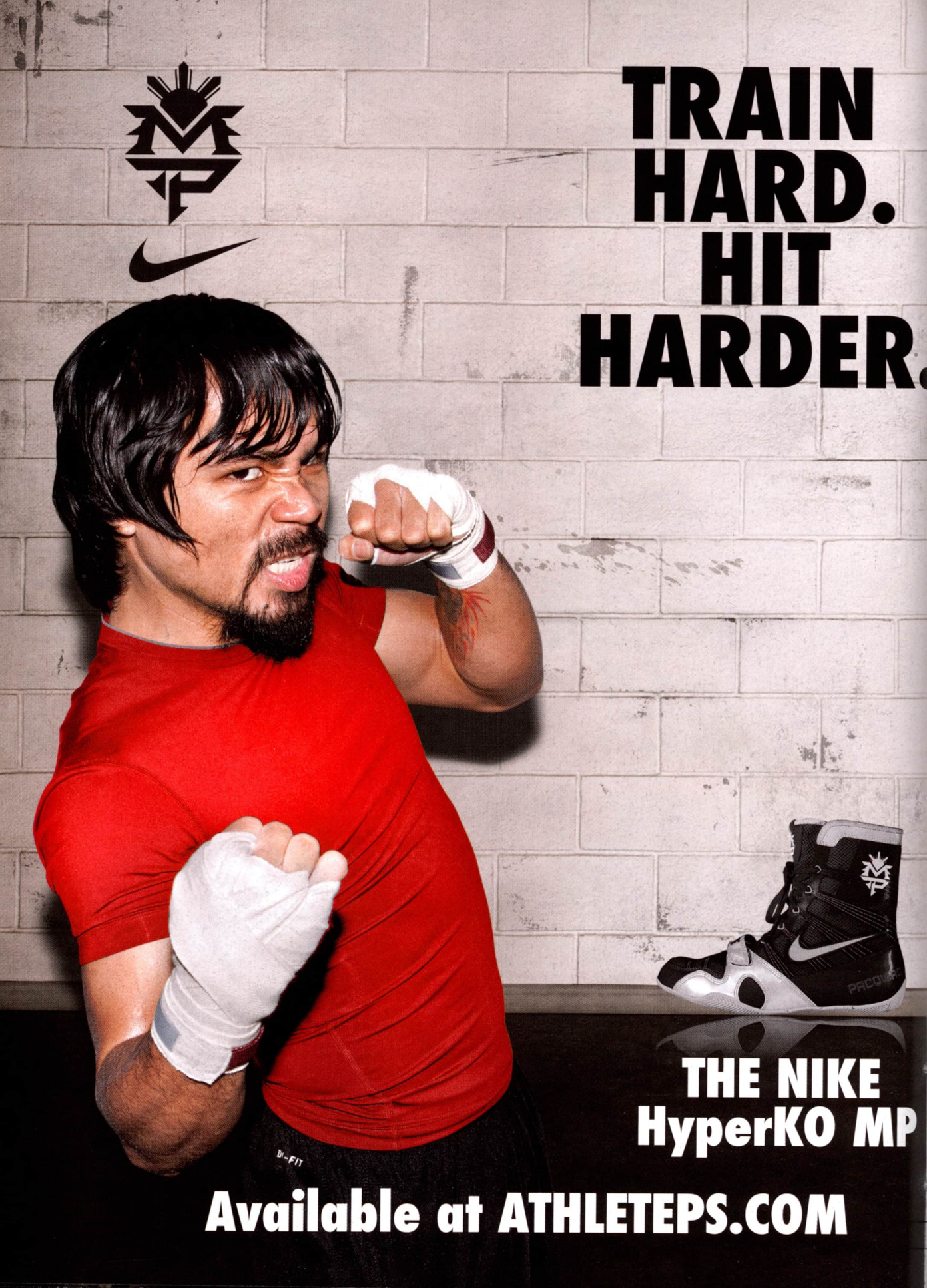
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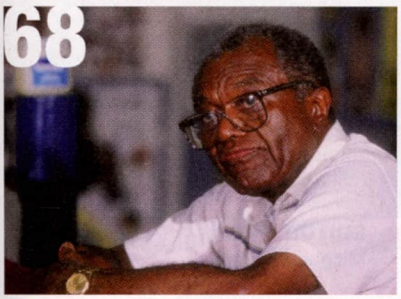

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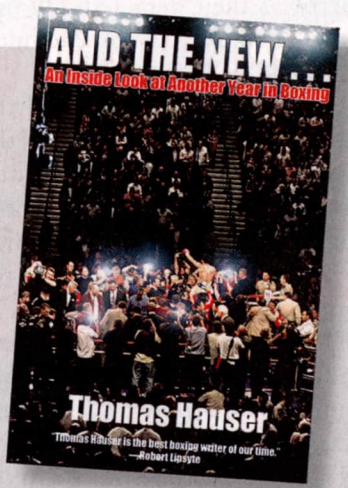

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BOOK REVIEW
AUTHOR THOMAS HAUSER PROVIDES A COMPLETE PICTURE OF THE SPORT IN HIS BOOK AND THE NEW … AN INSIDE LOOK AT ANOTHER YEAR IN BOXING. GO TO: http://bit.ly/10o9FCc

AN INDELIBLE MOMENT

By: **Michael Rosenthal**

Juan Manuel Marquez's knockout of Manny Pacquiao on Dec. 8 in Las Vegas was the type of moment that makes boxing great.

We thought the blue print was set after the pair's three previous meetings, each of which could've gone either way. Almost everyone expected another close fight. And then Marquez threw a thunderous right counter at Pacquiao's head and a curve at the rest of us, planting one of the greatest fighters ever face first into the canvas.

The moment it happened the mouths of those at ringside fell open in shock amid repeated strains of "Oh my god! Oh my god!" I was riveted later by videos of large groups of Filipinos watching on television screens in horror as their hero fell. On one video, a shaken fan of Pacquiao repeated: "Is he dead?"

The night of the fight and the next day it was the talk of the sports world, which often dismisses boxing as a dying sport but then fully embraces it when something like this happens in the ring.

The great Manny Pacquiao knocked out? Rendered unconscious by one punch? It doesn't get more dramatic than that.

The knockout doesn't rise to the level of Buster Douglas' epic upset of Mike Tyson in 1990, which is arguably the greatest upset in the history of sports. It IS comparable to 45-year-old George Foreman's one-punch KO of Michael Moorer in 1994, which made everyone's favorite grill salesman the oldest heavyweight champ ever.

Indeed, the stunning image of a prone Pacquiao has claimed an indelible niche in the sport's rich lore.

Of course, Pacquiao's unfortunate fate was extraordinarily painful for him, those close to him and the people of the Philippines, who have come to revere the eight-division champion as something akin to a deity.

The fact we found his demise thrilling might seem to be callous or even macabre. As he so eloquently put it, though: "If you don't want to taste a loss, don't compete."

Indeed, Pacquiao was competing at the highest level when the end came. He fought with a spirit we hadn't seen in recent fights, as if he were determined to do to Marquez what the Mexican ultimately did to him.

In other words, he tried to do something great. And to do that he had to take risks, which in this case backfired. He was caught in a moment of recklessness with what is now an historic counterpunch, putting Pacquiao to sleep and instantly making Marquez one of the great heroes of Mexican boxing.

Pacquiao shouldn't be judged too harshly. Remember, most great champions end up in his position. Marquez deserves any accolades that come his way.

And the rest of us should simply feel fortunate that we were around to see it.

The RING

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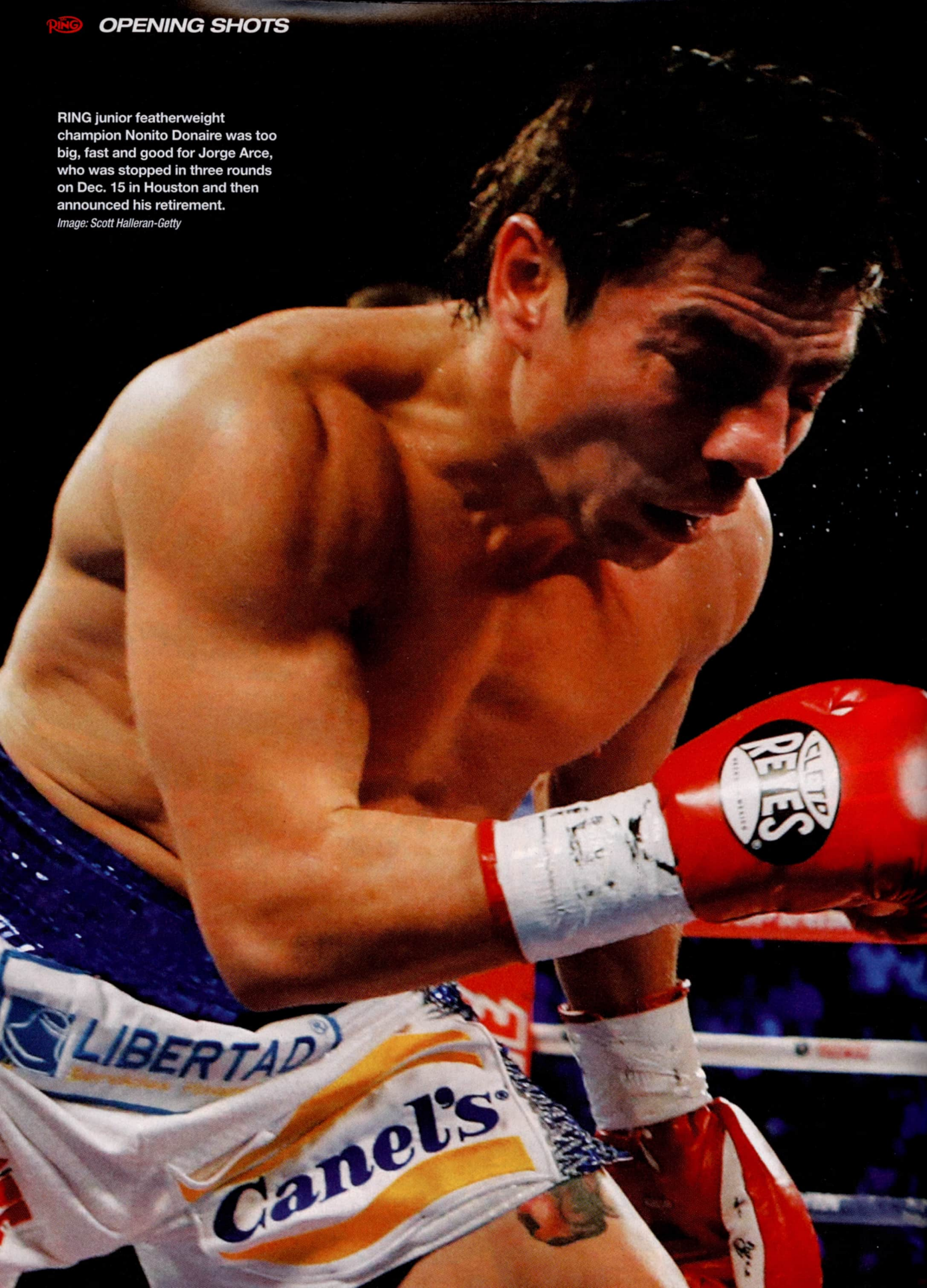
Leo Santa Cruz (right) was as vicious as ever but met with considerable resistance from a stubborn Alberto Guevara on Dec. 15 in Los Angeles. Santa Cruz retained his IBF bantamweight title by a unanimous decision.

Image: Harry How-Golden Boy-Getty



RING junior featherweight champion Nonito Donaire was too big, fast and good for Jorge Arce, who was stopped in three rounds on Dec. 15 in Houston and then announced his retirement.
Image: Scott Halleran-Getty

EVERLAST
TOP RANK
TECATE
TOP RANK

Filipinos who gathered to watch the Manny Pacquiao-Juan Manuel Marquez fight on a large television screen in Manila were left dumbfounded when their hero was knocked out with one punch.
Image: Jay Directo-AFP-Getty Images

WRONG AGAIN

I sincerely hope that Juan Manuel Marquez and Manny Pacquiao never fight each other again because I am tired of always being proven wrong by Marquez. I honestly thought Marquez would lose this time. After all, he is another year older and hadn't fought in a long time. In the first five rounds I thought I had finally gotten it right as I watched Pacquiao get the better of most rounds even though he was knocked down hard. But I guess I underestimated Marquez's skills, experience and ingenuity, not to mention the pent-up rage and frustration that he has held onto for the past eight years. And in the sixth round, it all came out in the form of a counter right hand that Pacquiao didn't see coming. Juan Manuel Marquez, once again you have proven yourself as a true champion, a warrior and an absolute legend. Congratulations on a stunning victory. And kudos to Manny Pacquiao for putting up a great fight as usual.

Bernardo Aguirre
Sydney, Australia

HARD TO UNDERSTAND

What on earth are Adrien Broner and Robert Guerrero doing on THE RING pound-for-pound list? Broner has stepped up his level of competition twice, against Antonio DeMarco and Daniel Ponce De Leon. He should be 1-1 in those fights. I get that there's a lot of support for Broner, but mere anticipation shouldn't be enough to get on the pound-for-pound list.

Guerrero, meanwhile, is coming off the biggest win of his career, but we're talking about a guy surviving off of "B"-level fighters and below. There's nothing pound for pound about Guerrero, which should be obvious to anyone who saw the Orlando Salido or Daud Yordan fights. He surprised me in beating Andre Berto, but that had a lot more to do with Berto looking the worst he ever has than with Guerrero doing anything we haven't seen from him before.

Todd Smith
Washington, D.C.

CUT DOWN, PART II

In your October 2012 issue, you published an item titled *Cut Down: Five Fighters Who, Like Paul Williams, had their Careers Cut Short by Tragic Accidents*. They were Young Stribling, Sandy Saddler, Marcel Cerdan, Carlos Cruz and Salvador Sanchez. We in Australia were unfortunate to have Dave Sands and Les Darcy in that unfortunate position.

Harold Grube
Lithgow,
New South Wales, Australia

Note: Dave Sands, an Australian Aborigine, was one of six fighting Sands brothers in the 1940s and early '50s. He never won a world title but was a top-rated middleweight and twice beat Hall of Famer Bobo Olson. Sands (97-10-1, 62 KOs) was killed in a car accident in 1952. He was only 26. Darcy (46-4, 29 KOs) was a boxing wizard who came to the U.S. and beat many of the best Americans in the mid-1910s only to die at 21 of pneumonia.

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FOR THE RECORD

THE RING editors made two significant mistakes in the January 2013 issue we are compelled to acknowledge here. One, in our annual RING 100 feature, we inadvertently published the wrong capsule for No. 20 Orlando Salido. The correct capsule is below. And two, in a chart chronicling Manny Pacquiao's best years, the No. 1 year – 2008 – was left out. It also is below. THE RING regrets the errors.

RING 100

20. ORLANDO SALIDO

Division: Featherweight (WBO titleholder)
Record: 39-11-2 (27 KOs)
Last Year's Ranking: 33
Status Report: Proved that his stunning knockout of Juan Manuel Lopez last year was no fluke by doing it again in March, this time in the 10th round. Managed to go down twice against unheralded Weng Haya before scoring an eighth-round KO before the Lopez rematch and stopped Moises Gutierrez in the third round after it.
Future: Was headed toward a potential barnburner with Mikey Garcia but broke his finger and couldn't fight. Now hopes to meet Garcia in early 2013.
Think About it: Went 11-7-2 in his first 20 contests; is 28-4 since. Two of the four losses were against Juan Manuel Marquez and Yuriorkis Gamboa, and the other two were disputed.

Go here to see the full RING 100:
http://bit.ly/VA6KP5

PACQUIAO'S GREATEST YEARS

2008

Record: 3-0
Fight by fight: Defeated Juan Manuel Marquez (SD 12), David Diaz (TKO 9), and Oscar De La Hoya (TKO 8)
Titles won: WBC junior lightweight (Marquez); WBC lightweight (Diaz); RING junior lightweight (Marquez; title was vacant)
Comment: Pacquiao arrived as a true star with his dominating victory over De La Hoya.

Go here to see the full chart:
http://bit.ly/W2yAnL

Image: John Gurzinski-AFP-Getty

Juan Manuel Marquez expected Manny Pacquiao to be more aggressive in their fourth fight and took advantage of it.

MARQUEZ WAS ONE STEP AHEAD

By: **David Greisman**

Manny Pacquiao was not felled by any of the usual distractions, not by leg cramps, gambling, marital discord or his involvement in the only enterprise even more corrupt than boxing: politics. Pacquiao was merely on the receiving end of a great punch from a smart fighter. And Pacquiao was a victim of his own success, first against Timothy Bradley in June and then spectacularly so against Juan Manuel Marquez on Dec. 8.

It was his success against the bigger and stronger but slower fighters of the higher weight classes that brought Pacquiao such acclaim, as he wove between their shots and stung them repeatedly with painfully pinpoint punching. Yet when he stepped in the ring with Marquez, he was confronted with a counterpuncher accustomed to seeing someone his size and speed.

Marquez could do to Pacquiao what Pacquiao had done to so many others: make him all too aware, and far too wary, of what could be coming.

This is what made the third Pacquiao-Marquez fight a tactical affair. And this is why the fourth Pacquiao-Marquez fight ended with Pacquiao making a tactical error.

Their third fight had ended controversially, which had become the norm for their series. That time, however, more people than not were certain that Pacquiao did not deserve the victory he was handed by the judges. And then against Bradley, Pacquiao wound up on the receiving end of a robbery; judges had become so accustomed to seeing him dismantle his opponents that they saw him more for what he wasn't doing to Bradley than what he was.

Both Pacquiao and Marquez knew they needed to change their approaches for their fourth fight. Marquez needed to take his fate out of the judges' hands and Pacquiao no longer felt comfortable with allowing a close fight to go to the scorecards.

Pacquiao knew he needed to be more aggressive. Marquez knew that Pacquiao would be just that – and had a plan for it. Marquez set up a perfect counter shot and then loaded up with power.

Pacquiao had long thrived on having more speed and more power than his foes. Marquez has long thrived on having more intelligence, though. He took a look at Pacquiao's advantages — and then took advantage of them.

• • • • • • • • • • • • • •

The often fleeting nature of the alphabet-title picture leads to this conclusion: What matters more is not what you won, but who you won against.

Miguel Cotto and Austin Trout once held two versions of the same sanctioning body's belt. But while Cotto had more recognizable opponents on his record at junior middleweight, those illustrious matches created an illusion.

He was no more and no less a top 154-pounder than Trout, not until they faced each other. And then Trout proved that those very big names meant very little.

It is easy, and tempting, to be a revisionist historian and pick apart any fighter's record. Yet it was readily apparent from the outset that Cotto's run at junior middleweight paled in comparison to his time spent at 140 and 147.

He debuted at 154 with a world title win over Yuri Foreman, who was a legitimate titleholder for a belt that had lineage dating back to 2002. Foreman was far from the cream of the division, however, and Cotto did little to prove himself as being so when he followed the Foreman win with victories over an aged Ricardo Mayorga and a damaged Antonio Margarito. Cotto then received far too much credit for losing to Floyd Mayweather Jr., his last outing prior to the Trout bout.

Miguel Cotto (left) isn't the fighter at 154 pounds that he was at lower weights, which became obvious when he fought Austin Trout.
Image: Naoki Fukuda

Trout's resume stood out even less: winning a vacant belt against Rigoberto Alvarez and defending it against David Lopez, Frank LoPorto and Delvin Rodriguez. Trout is a legitimate 154-pounder, though, not a smaller man coming up in weight as he ages. That he had a lesser name — and that he had only beaten lesser names — is a product of a sport in which stars only face foes who bring more reward than risk.

Very few of the titleholders and top prospects at junior middleweight have faced each other. We've had James Kirkland stop Alfredo Angulo, Vanes Martirosyan and Erislandy Lara fight to a draw, and, most recently, Trout defeat Cotto. We haven't seen these boxers winnow out their ranks through a de facto tournament; there's no need when they can maintain the mirage of contention without ever truly showing their superiority.

Even with the loss to Trout, the talk for Cotto afterward remained a clash between him and Canelo Alvarez, a very lucrative and potentially very entertaining bout, but one that also serves to keep up the mirage that has been Alvarez's reign at 154. But if that illusion of grandeur can deliver Alvarez to a fight with Mayweather, then the only thing that matters is how real the payday will be.

• • • • • • • • • • • • • •

It should have come as little surprise that the latest, greatest American heavyweight hype, Seth Mitchell, wound up knocked out against an opponent who was supposed to be just another stop on the Klitschko Challenger Express.

It is little surprise because HBO has been known to hitch a horse and ride it even if we don't know that it can handle the burden. Mitchell had never even proven himself against other American heavyweight prospects. Yet the former football player was close to all we saw on that network, just as we had been force-fed more Chris Arreola than even Arreola's ample gut could stomach.

Mitchell is a class act, a good story and a dedicated fighter. That doesn't make him a great boxer or a deserving challenger. But when the goal is the title shot and the payday that comes with it, it doesn't seem to matter anymore how well you make the run to the finish line — only that you remain standing on the way there. ■

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MUTUAL ADMIRATION

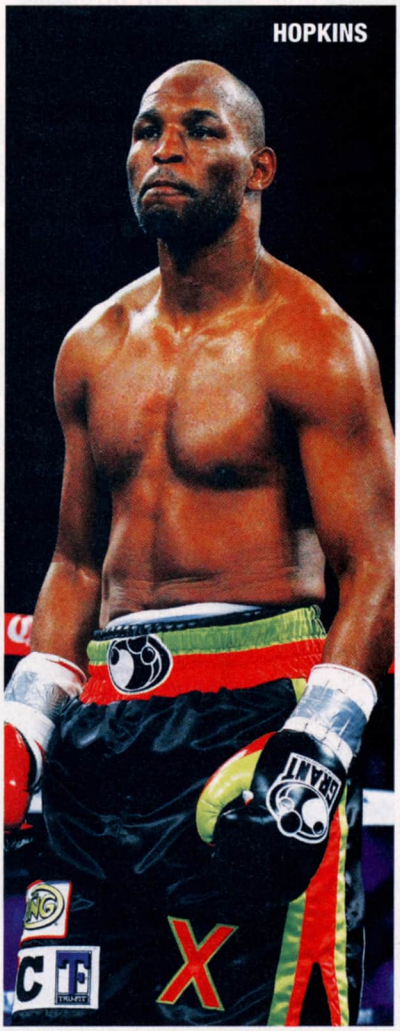
By: **Thomas Hauser**

Bernard Hopkins had his first pro fight as a light heavyweight on Oct. 11, 1988. He was the dominant middleweight in boxing for a 10-year period beginning in 1995 and later moved back up in weight to annex the light heavyweight crown. During the course of his career, he has boxed 452 rounds in 60 fights.

James Toney began his pro career as a middleweight on October 26, 1989. He was at his best at 160 and 168 pounds, but won belts from various sanctioning bodies while fighting at weights as high as 248 pounds. He has now boxed 631 rounds in 84 bouts.

Hopkins and Toney never met in the ring, which is a shame. Each man is a master craftsman. And each man is a talker. The pre-fight press conferences would have been memorable in and of themselves. Yet over the years, they've voiced respect for one another. Listen to what they've had to say about each other in the past.

James Toney: "I'm a natural born fighter. Everybody else was taught to fight. But Bernard learned his lessons



Images: Getty

QUICK QUIZ

1. WHO WAS THE FIRST MAN TO BE DESIGNATED FIGHTER OF THE YEAR BY THE BOXING WRITERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA?

2. WHO WERE THE PARTICIPANTS IN BOXING'S FIRST CRUISERWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP FIGHT?

3. MUHAMMAD ALI BESTOWED NICKNAMES ON THE FOLLOWING FIGHTERS: SONNY LISTON, ARCHIE MOORE, FLOYD PATTERSON, GEORGE CHUVALO, ERNIE TERRELL, JOE FRAZIER, GEORGE FOREMAN, EARNIE SHAVERS, LEON SPINKS AND LARRY HOLMES. WHAT WERE THOSE NICKNAMES AND ALI'S EXPLANATION FOR THEM?

well. He's a professional, and there aren't enough professionals in boxing today."

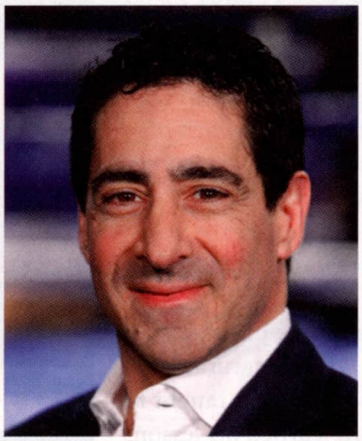
Bernard Hopkins: "James Toney in his whole career had problems with his weight. You take that away, Toney was the most defensive, the hardest to hit fighter in my era. He had a style, the roll with your shoulders, the roll with your head. I adopted that style and added it on to what I've been doing over the years. I'm not the easiest guy to hit. James Toney contributed to that, whether he knew that, whether he believes that. The difference between me and James Toney was that I always took care of my body the correct way."

GREATEST MOMENT IN SPORTS ... OUTSIDE OF BOXING

HBO PRESIDENT OF SPORTS KEN HERSHMAN

I was a terrible baseball player. I was a pretty good guard in basketball, but I was too short. The sport I was best at was soccer.

In 1980, I played right forward on an all-star team from Long Island that was made up of 16 and 17 year olds. We were competitive at what I thought was a high level. Then we played against a team from Scotland. The Scottish kids were the same age we were. But it was no contest. I was in awe of their skills and the way they played the game. They were so much better than we were. They played at a completely different level.



KEN HERSHMAN

We lost 5-0. There came a point where they were just toying with us and being merciful. They could have scored 10 goals if they'd wanted to. Their replacement players were almost as good as their starters. But they stopped attacking. Instead of trying to score when they had the ball in front of our goal, they'd pass it back out again.

I'm a competitive person. If this had been a tournament final against a heated rival, I'm sure I would have felt differently about it. But I remember very clearly appreciating how good these guys were and appreciating the sport in a way that I never had before. To be on the field in the middle of that artistry was special for me. I remember it more vividly than any of the other games we won or lost that year.

If someone told me that I could play against the New York Yankees for an inning, I'd do that, too. It would be an incredible experience to share the field with athletes that good.

QUIZ ANSWERS:

1. JACK DEMPSEY WAS THE BWAA'S FIRST FIGHTER OF THE YEAR. THAT WAS IN 1938. OBVIOUSLY, THE CRITERIA HAVE CHANGED SINCE THEN. DEMPSEY HAD RETIRED IN 1927, MORE THAN A DECADE EARLIER, AFTER LOSING TO GENE TUNNEY.

2. THE FIRST CRUISERWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP FIGHT WAS ON DEC. 8, 1979. MARVIN CAMEL AND MATT PARLOV FOUGHT TO A 15-ROUND DRAW FOR WHAT WAS THEN CALLED THE WBC JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CROWN. CAMEL WON THE TITLE BY DECISION IN A REMATCH ON MARCH 31 OF THE FOLLOWING YEAR.

3. SONNY LISTON, THE BIG UGLY BEAR ("BECAUSE HE'S UGLY AND SMELLS LIKE A BEAR"); ARCHIE MOORE, THE OLD MAN ("HE'S OLD ENOUGH TO BE MY GRANDFATHER"); FLOYD PATTERSON, THE RABBIT ("IN THE RING, HE'S FRIGHTENED LIKE A RABBIT"); GEORGE CHUVALO, THE WASHERWOMAN ("HE PUNCHES LIKE A WOMAN WHO'S WASHING CLOTHES"); ERNIE TERRELL, THE OCTOPUS ("HE GRABS AND HOLDS A LOT WHEN HE FIGHTS"); JOE FRAZIER, THE GORILLA ("HE'S UGLY AND LOOKS LIKE A GORILLA"); GEORGE FOREMAN, THE MUMMY ("GEORGE IS SLOW. CLOMP! CLOMP! HE MOVES LIKE A MUMMY"); EARNIE SHAVERS, THE ACORN ("HE'S GOT A SHAVED HEAD THAT LOOKS LIKE AN ACORN"); LEON SPINKS, DRACULA ("THE MAN IS MISSING HIS FRONT TEETH"); LARRY HOLMES, THE PEANUT ("HIS HEAD IS SHAPED LIKE A PEANUT").

Thomas Hauser can be reached by email at thauser@rcn.com. His most recent book — *And the New ...: An Inside Look at Another Year in Boxing* was published by the University of Arkansas Press.

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ADVANCED DEGREES

Degrees of separation between fighters of today and their predecessors. This month: Legend Harry Greb to current pound-for-pound king Floyd Mayweather Jr.

HARRY GREB
fought Mickey Walker,
who fought …

Lou Brouillard, who fought …

Georgie Abrams, who fought …

Ray Robinson, who fought …

Joey Archer, who fought …

Emile Griffith, who fought …

Alan Minter, who fought …

Marvin Hagler, who fought …

Ray Leonard, who fought …

Hector Camacho, who fought …

Oscar De La Hoya, who fought …

▼

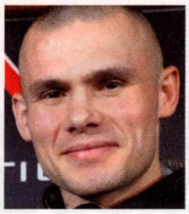
FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.

FIGHTERS' FAVORITES

WHAT BOXERS ARE INTO OUTSIDE THE SPORT

>>> MARTIN MURRAY

British middleweight contender



MUSIC: All kinds. The different kinds of music I have on my iPod is unbelievable … rock, old school, dance.
CAR: Audi R8.
FOOD: You're asking me when I'm dieting. I could eat anything! I like a nice Italian.
TATTOOS: The first one I got many years ago was of my Rugby team, which is a badge on my leg. I've got a sleeve; basically it's my kids' names, star signs, a guardian angel, and I've got a new one across the top of my chest. It's *Familia in Aeternum*, which is Latin and means "family forever."
ATHLETE (OUTSIDE BOXING): Usain Bolt.
MOVIE: There's too many. One of my favorite – and it has been for years – which I love is called *Life*, a comedy with Eddie Murphy and Martin Lawrence.
VIDEO GAME: I don't play on them, but I just started playing because my son has an Xbox. I like *Skylanders*.

>>> BEIBUT SHUMENOV

WBA light heavyweight titleholder from Kazakhstan

MUSIC: I do not have a particular favorite. I enjoy listening to a variety of music from all genres.
CAR: Bugatti Veyron
FOOD: Ribeye Steak
TATTOOS: None
ATHLETE (OUTSIDE BOXING): Usain Bolt; (Olympic wrestlers) Jordan Burroughs, Manuchar Kvirkvelia and Karam Gaber.
MOVIE: I have a lot of favorite movies that include *The Godfather, Rocky* and *Gladiator* (the 1992 boxing movie starring James Marshall and Cuba Gooding Jr.).
VIDEO GAME: I stopped playing video games as it distracted from my schedule. I have a huge addiction for video games.

>>> FELIX STURM

Middleweight contender from Germany

MUSIC: All kinds of music.
CAR: I own a Mercedes S-Class. The perfect car, especially if you have a family.
FOOD: Italian and Chinese food.
TATTOOS: No. That's not my world.
ATHLETE (OUTSIDE BOXING): Michael Jordan is one of my favorite all-time athletes. Currently, I follow LeBron James and Edin Dzeko (soccer).
MOVIE: My favorite movie is *John Q* with Denzel Washington. Another one would be *The Intouchables*, a recent French picture.
VIDEO GAME: I don't really have a favorite video game.

Images: Getty and THE RING

GOOD, BAD, WORSE

THE BEST AND WORST IN BOXING FROM THE PAST MONTH

By: **Michael Rosenthal**

GOOD

Should Arturo Gatti have been inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame? Gatti was a good boxer but not extraordinarily talented. And while he beat many good fighters – Gabriel Ruelas, James Leija and archrival Micky Ward, to name a few – he felt short against hall of fame-caliber opponents. That typically is the litmus test for entry into the Hall. Gatti was special, though. Fighters don't fight in a vacuum; each of them is part athlete and part entertainer. And no one was a better entertainer in the ring than Gatti. He seemed to encounter mammoth obstacles every time he fought and, to the delight of the fans, gave 100 percent of his soul to overcome them. That's why fans loved him, a fact obviously not lost on those who voted him into the Class of 2013.

BAD

I had the good fortune of growing up in Los Angeles with the voices of Vin Scully and Chick Hearn, broadcasting legends who were as integral to their sports as the athletes. I feel the same about Larry Merchant, who has retired after 35 years as an analyst for HBO. Merchant was part of the fabric of boxing. His thoughts – so eloquently articulated – gave what we saw in so many big fights clear perspective. And he always seemed to ask the right post-fight questions, even if they ruffled feathers. No one did it better. His departure will leave a significant void. That fact is particularly sad for those of us who know Merchant, who is as impressive off camera as he is on. The good news is that he plans to participate in television projects going forward. We know they'll be worth watching.

WORSE

Imagine you go to work and someone attacks you for doing your job. That's what happened to veteran Getty Images photographer Al Bello after Juan Manuel Marquez knocked out Manny Pacquiao on Dec. 8 in Las Vegas. Bello had his camera focused on a prone Pacquiao when the Filipino's advisor, Michael Koncz, and friend Restituto "Buboy" Fernandez allegedly decided to get rough with him. I understand that Koncz and Fernandez were being protective of Pacquiao; I felt the same way about my colleague (Bello) after the incident. And Koncz and Fernandez were remorseful after the fact. Still, everyone must take responsibility for their actions. Koncz and Fernandez deserved some sort of punishment – Suspension? Fine? – from the Nevada State Athletic Commission.

10 A MONTHLY BOXING LIST

THIS MONTH: Oldest living heavyweight titleholders (ages as of Dec. 31, 2012):

73 ERNIE TERRELL
72 JIMMY ELLIS
70 MUHAMMAD ALI
69 KEN NORTON
63 GEORGE FOREMAN
63 LARRY HOLMES
60 MIKE WEAVER
59 JAMES SMITH
59 LEON SPINKS
57 GERRIE COETZEE

THE NEXT FIVE: Michael Spinks, 56; Tim Witherspoon, 55; Pinklon Thomas, 54; Tony Tubbs, 54; Francesco Damiani, 54.

RING POLL

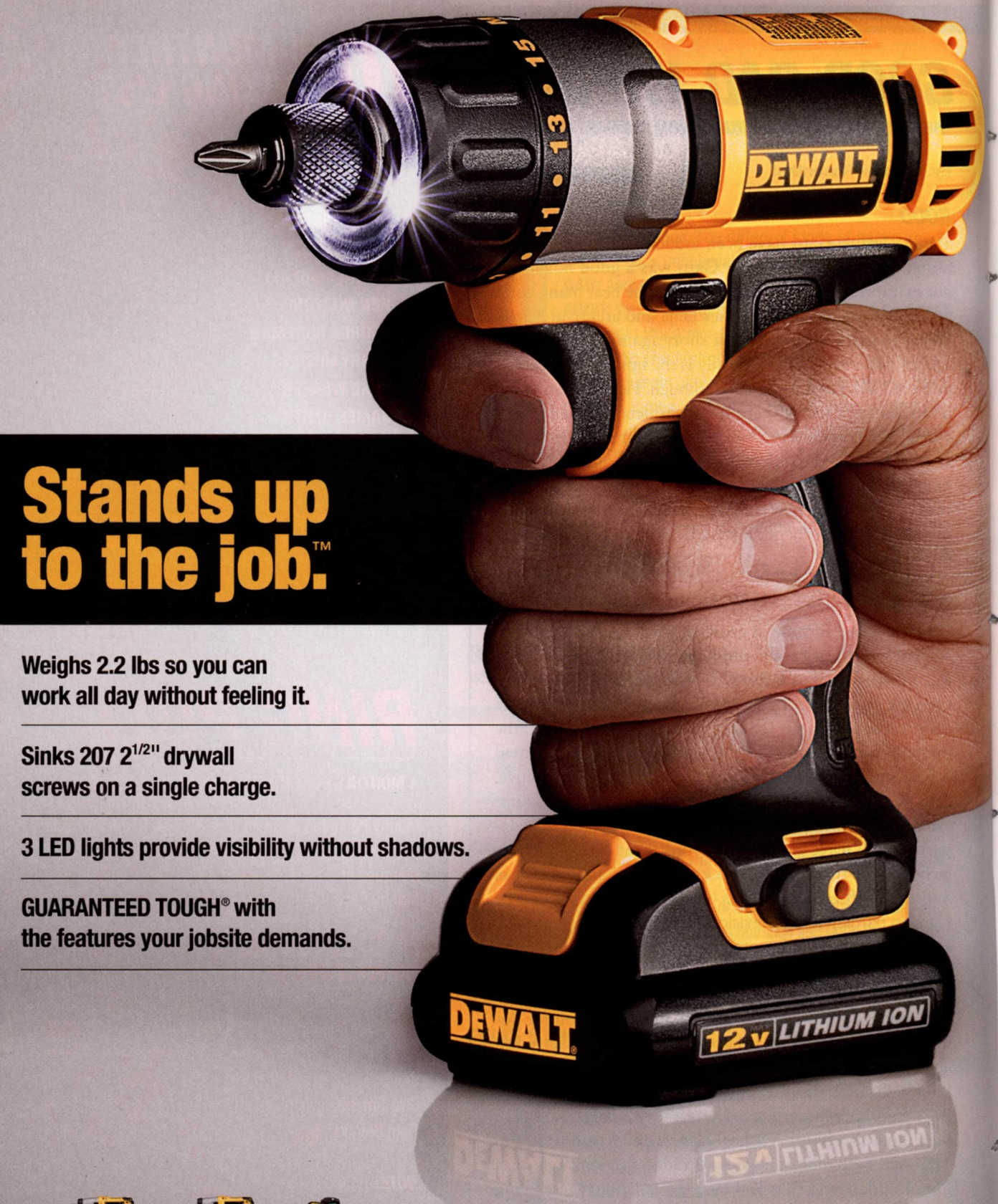
A MONTHLY POLL OF OUR RINGTV.COM READERS.

Manny Pacquiao at press time had yet to decide upon his next step after his knockout loss to Juan Manuel Marquez on Dec. 8. Thus, we asked: What should Manny Pacquiao do next?

THE PERCENTAGES:

Fight Juan Manuel Marquez a fifth time	34.6
Push for a Floyd Mayweather Jr. showdown	20.4
Retire	19.2
Give Tim Bradley a rematch	15.2
Fight Brandon Rios	10.6

NOTE: *17,561 readers voted in the poll.*



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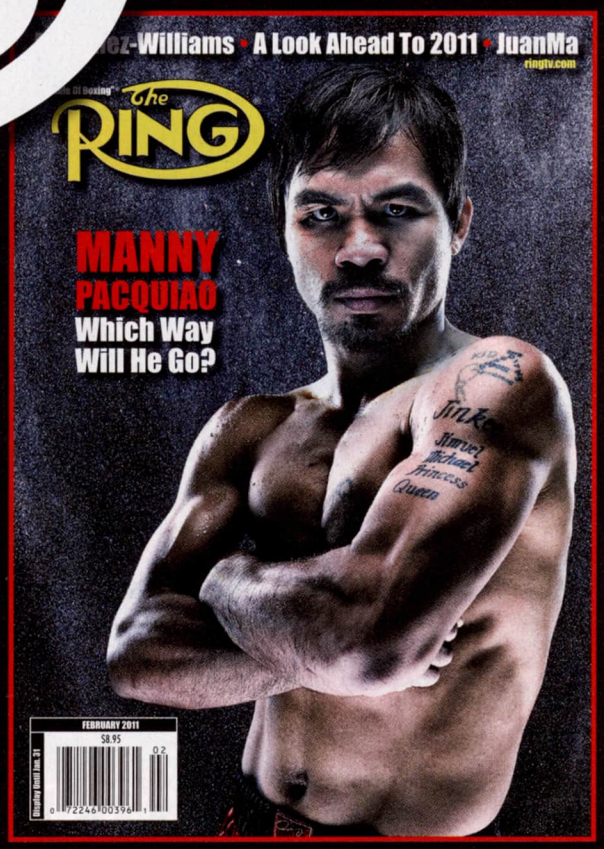

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Image: Marc Serota-Getty

James Toney said that Samuel Peter was the best puncher and strongest opponent he ever faced.

JAMES TONEY

By: **Anson Wainwright**

Trainer Freddie Roach was asked recently to name the most-talented fighter with whom he ever worked. He didn't hesitate to respond: "James Toney."

Toney's questionable training and eating habits worked against him for much of his career, according to conventional wisdom, but that didn't prevent him from winning fights. Almost no one could cope with his skills when he was at his best. Only Roy Jones Jr. and Montell Griffin were able to beat him during his peak years.

And he was able to accomplish more than some might realize later in his career. For example, in his mid-30s, he was named RING Fighter of the Year after beating Vassiliy Jirov and Evander Holyfield in 2003.

Toney (74-7-3, 45 knockouts) was the RING Fighter of the Year for 1991, when, as a svelte middleweight, he stunned then-unbeaten Michael Nunn with an 11th-round knockout to win his first major title. That year, he also beat Reggie Johnson and Francesco Dell'Aquila and drew with Hall of Famer Mike McCallum. He would go on to fight McCallum two more times, going 2-0-1 overall.

Now 44, Toney has been fighting professionally for 24 years and apparently has no plans to quit any time soon. He's coming off a fifth-round knockout of Bobby Gunn in a scheduled 12-round heavyweight fight in Southaven, Miss., winning a fringe title in the process.

Toney graciously agreed to reveal to THE RING his toughest opponents in 10 key categories.

James Toney was impressed with the boxing ability and speed of Roy Jones Jr., who he fought in 1994. *Image: Holly Stein-Getty*

BEST OVERALL:
MIKE McCALLUM
He was very cagey, very crafty. Great jab, great ring generalship, everything.

BEST BOXER:
ROY JONES JR.
Roy Jones by far. He had all the intangibles. He could get in and out, kind of like a smaller version of (Muhammad) Ali. Very fast, very good boxer, best hand speed I ever fought.

BEST JAB:
McCALLUM
Once again Mike McCallum. He had a better jab than all of them – Holyfield, all of them. Mike McCallum, he was the master.

BEST PUNCHER:
SAMUEL PETER
I'd say Sam Peter. He hit me one time and Merqui Sosa he hit me on the side of the head and stunned me, but as far as the hardest puncher, Sam Peter was a good puncher. He hit me a few times and shook me up. He made my grandparents feel it. Holyfield was a good puncher but not like Sam Peter.

BEST DEFENSE:
McCALLUM
He slipped uppercuts up the middle, he made you miss without moving. He made you pay when you punch.

BEST CHIN:
McCALLUM
He took some shots. I hit him with the kitchen sink and the house.

FASTEST HANDS:
JONES
Oh, hands down, Roy Jones. Nobody was that fast. He was ridiculous fast. (Michael) Nunn was fast but he wasn't Roy Jones fast.

FASTEST FEET:
JONES
One thing when you fight a scared man, everything is fast about him. He doesn't wanna get hit.

SMARTEST:
McCALLUM
He was so crafty. Nobody compares to an old school guy; Mike McCallum was an old school guy. I had to beat him at his own game. He made you think – not run in there and knock him out like I was doing (to other guys).

STRONGEST:
PETER
Sam Peter was strong physically but mentally I broke him. "Prince" Charles Williams was a good, strong guy – he gave me his best shots but he couldn't take one. You saw what happened. I chopped the tree and he fell sideways like the leaning tower of Pisa.

THE CLASS OF 2013

By: **Brian Harty**

Image: Al Bello-Getty

The late Arturo Gatti, pictured here fighting rival Micky Ward, is the biggest name in the International Boxing Hall of Fame's Class of 2013.

Canastota residents, check the levels on your schnapps bottles and batten down the mailboxes – the Class of 2013 is coming to town.

On June 9, glasses will be raised in upstate New York to celebrate the latest additions to the International Boxing Hall of Fame, a short list which includes jab-master Virgil Hill and two-time titlist Myung-Woo Yuh. And of course everyone will pour out a little liquor for this year's most conspicuously absent inductee, Arturo "Thunder" Gatti.

Hill won a middleweight silver medal at the 1984 Olympics and held world titles five times as a pro. The meat of his career was spent at light heavyweight, where he won the WBA's belt by knocking out Leslie Stewart in 1987 and successfully defended it 10 times before giving it up by decision to Thomas Hearns in 1991. Three fights later his waist and the strap were reunited, though, and he defended it another 10 times before losing to Dariusz Michalczewski in 1997, followed by a knockout loss to Roy Jones Jr.

Hill wasn't out, however, and was named THE RING's Comeback of the Year when he won the WBA cruiserweight title against Fabrice Tiozzo in 2000. He lost it to Jean Marc Mormeck in his next fight and subsequently tested positive for a banned diuretic but continued to fight until 2007.

Junior flyweight Yuh will also be enshrined, thus joining fellow South Korean 80s-sensation Jung-Koo Chang, who was inducted in 2010. Yuh broke Chang's record for most consecutive title defenses at 108 pounds, retaining the WBA belt 17 times during what is also the division's longest uninterrupted reign: six years and two months between 1985 and 1991.

Others who got the nod on the ballot this year include "Bite Fight" and *MTV Celebrity Death Match* referee Mills Lane, ring announcer (and most likely to be spotted proclaiming, "It's showtime!" before doing a keg-stand) Jimmy Lennon Jr. and journalist Colin Hart.

Posthumous inductions will include Wesley Ramey and Jeff Smith in the Old-Timer category, manager Arturo "Cuyo" Hernandez in the Non-Participant category, cartoonist Ted Carroll in the Observer category and Joe Coburn in the Pioneer category.

Sadly, though, the year's most-newsworthy induction in the Modern category will also be posthumous.

There was a fair amount of hand-wringing after Gatti's nomination was announced, with pundits and fans wondering whether the Boardwalk Hall brawler really had the skills or the record to merit elevation to the pantheon of boxing's greatest. Once voters were behind the curtain, however, there was no question.

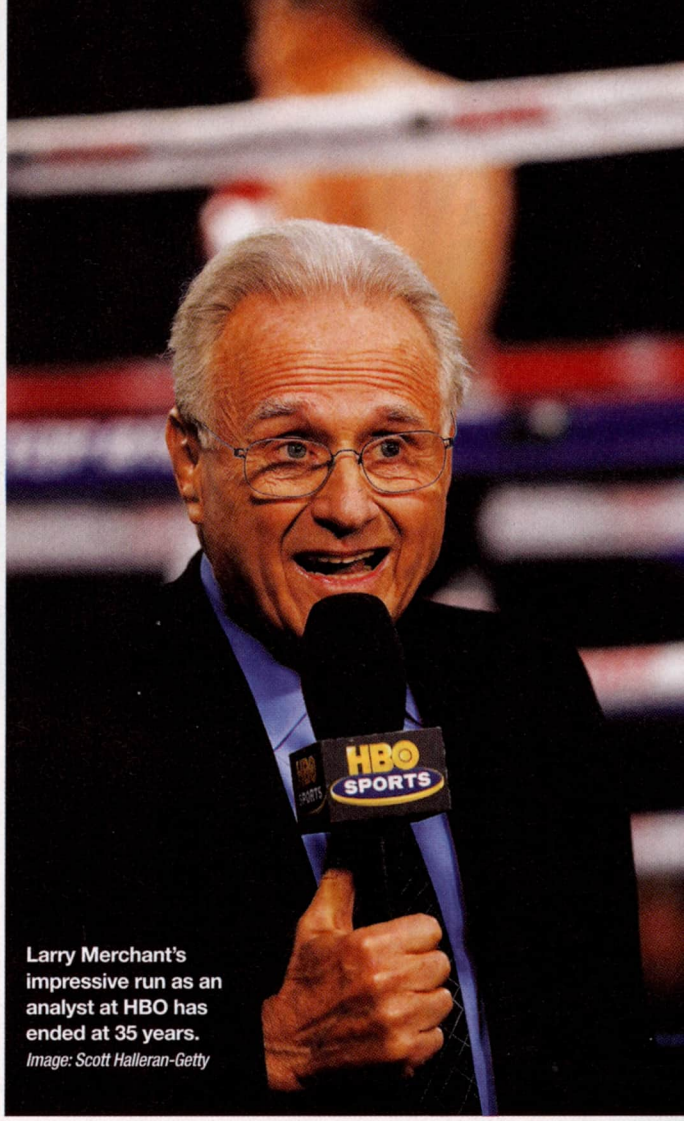
It would be a disservice to the man himself to say that Gatti got the sympathy vote following his death in 2009, which many people still insist was a homicide. Rather, votes were cast for the blood he spilled against Micky Ward in three battles over a 13-month period, the first and third of which were THE RING's Fight of the Year even though no titles were at stake. Votes were cast for his unflagging will, both in victory (over Gabriel Ruelas) and in defeat (against Oscar De La Hoya). They were cast for the memories of magnificent combat in thunderous arenas.

Voters followed their hearts, which is appropriate, because Gatti gave his every time. ■

THE END OF A REMARKABLE 35-YEAR RUN

By: **Brian Harty**

Self-described "fight degenerate" **Larry Merchant** was ringside at the **Nonito Donaire-Jorge Arce** card in Houston for his last broadcast as HBO's on-air analyst, a spot he'd occupied for 35 years. A former columnist for the *Philadelphia Daily News* and *New York Post*, Merchant joined HBO in 1978, back when the fledgling cable network was filling a lot of its airtime with taped events like concerts and comedy shows. *World Championship Boxing* became the dominant outlet in the sport over time, and Merchant's tuxedoed presence was a mainstay, along with his sometimes lyrical, sometimes cryptic post-fight soliloquies and his combustive in-ring interviews. Usually the smallest person on screen in the crush after a fight, Merchant's conversations and confrontations with the winners and losers, whether seen as displays of courageous honesty or unbridled rudeness, produced countless memories for boxing fans and earned the devotee of Hemingway-esque heroism a stature on par with the giants surrounding him. Time may have denied him a shot at kicking **Floyd Mayweather Jr.**'s ass, but without a doubt Merchant took a lot of other names over the course of his career. ...



Larry Merchant's impressive run as an analyst at HBO has ended at 35 years.
Image: Scott Halleran-Getty

With **50 Cent** having proved that rapping and promoting can indeed be done at the same time with his Spiderman-style ring entrance from the rafters before **Yuriorkis Gamboa**'s successful return against **Michael Farenas**, others are playing "follow the leader." **Eric B.**, who was the DJ half of influential rap duo "Eric B. and Rakim," during the late 1980s-early '90s' hip-hop boom, is getting into the boxing biz with the formation of a sanctioning body called the WCB (World Championship Boxing). ...

Not to be confused with the WBC, which just elected (they have elections?) **Jose Sulaiman** to another four years as president, a position he has held since 1975. The first proclamation of his new term was to reverse his opinion of **Pacquiao-Marquez IV**, which he had labeled "without any importance" before Dec. 8, saying afterward that Marquez had "placed Mexican boxing back to the heights where it belongs." ...

Evander Holyfield's gloves used in the infamous "Bite Fight" against **Mike Tyson** in 1997 sold at auction for $35,200, while in a separate sale the gloves worn by **Muhammad Ali** against **Sonny Liston** in 1964 and against **Joe Frazier** in 1971 went for $385,848 per pair. The trunks worn by **Salvador Sanchez** in his final fight in 1982, however, proved to be worthless in nephew **Salvador Sanchez II**'s fight against Jayson Velez on Dec. 1. ...

And former junior bantamweight titleholder **Jiro Watanabe** was arrested in Japan on organized crime-related charges. Was he involved in a slow-motion shootout involving lots of sideways handguns and sunglasses? No, he was playing golf at a club that doesn't allow yakuza and didn't tell them he was a gangster. ■

CAITLIN HIXX

HEIGHT: 5-foot-3
WEIGHT: 104 pounds
MEASUREMENTS: 32-23-32
STANCE: Orthodox
FAVORITE BOXER: Muhammad Ali
HOMETOWN: Houston
CURRENT LOCATION: Houston
WHERE YOU'VE SEEN HER: Numerous publications, including *American Curves*, *MuscleMag*, *Ultimate MMA*, *Maxim*, *FIGHT!* and *Maximum Fitness*.
BOOKING INFO: Bookings@CaitlinHixx.com

Image: **Dave Alan**

RING CARD GIRL OF THE MONTH

CAITLIN HIXX

Image: Dave Alan

THE RING CARD GIRL OF THE MONTH BY: **HEATHER SHANHOLTZ**

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submit photos and bio to **ringcardgirl@sepublications.com**

Image: Dave Alan

Image: Alexandre Meneghini-Associated Press

Juan Manuel Marquez was honored by Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto after Marquez's victory over Manny Pacquiao.

FIGHTER OF THE MONTH:

JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ

By: **Michael Rosenthal**

Juan Manuel Marquez had many notable accomplishments in his impressive 19-year boxing career going into Dec. 8.

Eight major titles in four weight divisions. Victories over the likes of Manuel Medina, Derrick Gainer, Orlando Salido, Marco Antonio Barrera, Joel Casamayor and Juan Diaz. And three fights against Manny Pacquiao – a draw and two losses – that many believe he won.

Nothing compares to what he did on Dec. 8, though.

Most knowledgeable observers were expecting Marquez-Pacquiao IV to be similar to I, II and III, a hard-fought battle between two great boxers who are perfectly matched. And for five-plus rounds, that's what it was – and a little bit more.

Marquez put Pacquiao down with a looping right in the third round, although the Filipino didn't appear to be hurt. In the fifth, Pacquiao scored a knockdown and landed a number of punishing blows late in the round. Some thought Marquez might be stopped.

And then, with only seconds to go in the sixth round, Marquez landed a right counter that we'll never forget. The "perfect punch," as trainer Freddie Roach called it, knocked Pacquiao flat on his face and into never-never land for several minutes.

That image sent the pro-Marquez crowd at the MGM Grand into a deafening tizzy as their man jumped on the ropes in one corner and thrust his arms in the air, well aware that he had just done something truly monumental.

Marquez had knocked Manny Pacquiao out cold. Amazing. ■

POUND FOR POUND: Following Manny Pacquiao's loss to Juan Manuel Marquez, there was a "re-imagining" of the mythical top ten. The stalemate at No. 2 was finally broken and Floyd Mayweather Jr. assumed the No. 1 spot, with Pacquiao plummeting to No. 7. Andre Ward moved up to the second-best position, followed by Marquez and Sergio Martinez (who was the only person to stay put), first-timer Adrien Broner at No. 5 and Nonito Donaire at No. 6. Robert Guerrero also debuted at No. 10, with No. 9 Vitali Klitschko and No. 10 Abner Mares being dropped to make way for the newcomers. After his win over Jorge Arce on Dec. 15, Donaire switched places with Broner.

HEAVYWEIGHTS: Few were convinced that Tomasz Adamek (No. 3 last month) deserved the win in his rematch with unrated Steve Cunningham. With that and further signs of slippage in mind, he was dropped to No. 5.

CRUISERWEIGHTS: Guillermo Jones (No. 5 last month) was dropped for inactivity, and the space created at No. 10 was filled by undefeated Russian Rakhim Chakhkiev.

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS: Mikkel Kessler (No. 8 last month) returned to super middleweight, pulling Juergen Braehmer and Tony Bellew up a notch and creating a vacant No. 10 for German Eduard Gutknecht to occupy. Gutknecht was later displaced by Jean Pascal, who returned to active duty with a win over Aleksy Kuziemski (unrated).

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS: Kessler resumed his life at super middleweight in the No. 2 position with a third-round stoppage of Brian Magee (unrated), while No. 8 Andre Dirrell was dropped for inactivity. George Groves (No. 7 last month) scored a unanimous decision over un-retired warhorse Glen Johnson on Dec. 15 and swapped spots with Sakio Bika, but having been pushed down by the arrival of Kessler found himself again at No. 7.

MIDDLEWEIGHTS: No change.

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS: Austin Trout (No. 9 last month) beat in-house favorite Miguel Cotto (No. 2 at the time) at Madison Square Garden, knocking the Puerto Rican star down to No. 4 and claiming No. 3 for himself. Saul Alvarez rose to No. 2 and everyone down to No. 8 slipped a spot as a result.

WELTERWEIGHTS: Pacquiao's face-first plunge on Dec. 8 carried over into the ratings as he fell from No. 1 to No. 4, while Pacman-slayer Marquez debuted at No. 2 (he is now rated at both 140 and 147 pounds). Everyone below Pacquiao shuffled accordingly, and No. 10 Vyacheslav Senchenko fell off the list.

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS: Joan Guzman (No. 9 last month) lost a technical decision to No. 6-rated Khabib Allakhverdiev after fracturing his hand and knee. Guzman was dropped from the list and Ruslan Provodnikov entered at No. 10.

LIGHTWEIGHTS: Raymundo Beltran (No. 10 last month) outpointed unrated Ji-Hoon Kim, swapping spots with No. 9 John Murray as a result. Murray was then dropped for inactivity and replaced by Mexican Daniel Estrada.

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS: Yuriorkis Gamboa returned to the ring after a 15-month absence, garnering the No. 4 slot with a unanimous decision over Michael Farenas. No. 7 Jorge Solis, whose last fight was a loss to No. 1 Takashi Uchiyama in December 2011, was dropped. Javier Fortuna (No. 8 last month) was also dropped after announcing that he would campaign at featherweight. Costa Rican Bryan Vazquez, who has flirted with the No. 10 spot in the past, again arrived to fill the post.

FEATHERWEIGHTS: Hozumi Hasegawa (No. 9 last month) left the ratings to return to 122 pounds, thus a space was created at No. 10 for Jamaica's Nicholas Walters.

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS: Poonsawat Kratingdaenggym (No. 2 last month) failed his medical exam before a scheduled bout with No. 1 Guillermo Rigondeaux on Dec. 15, allegedly testing positive for HIV. He was removed from the active ratings and Hasegawa came in at No. 10. Alexander Bakhtin (No. 7 last month) also switched places with Carl Frampton, ending up at No. 5.

BANTAMWEIGHTS: Joseph Agbeko (No. 3 last month) was removed for inactivity, with British 118-pounder Jamie McDonnell entering at No. 10.

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS: No change.

FLYWEIGHTS: No change.

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS: No change.

STRAWWEIGHTS: No change.

NOTE: THE RING Ratings Chairman Chuck Giampa considers input from the Ratings Panel but has final say on all changes. That applies to both the pound-for-pound and divisional ratings.

Glen Johnson (right) acknowledged his one-sided defeat at the hands of super middleweight contender George Groves.
Image: Scott Heavey-Getty

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HEAVYWEIGHTS
WEIGHT UNLIMITED

- **C** **WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO** Ukraine | 59-3-0 (50 KOs)
- **1.** **VITALI KLITSCHKO** Ukraine | 45-2-0 (41 KOs)
- **2.** **ALEXANDER POVETKIN** Russia | 25-0-0 (17 KOs)
- **3.** **DAVID HAYE** UK | 26-2-0 (24 KOs)
- **4.** **KUBRAT PULEV** Bulgaria | 17-0-0 (9 KOs)
- **5.** **TOMASZ ADAMEK** Poland | 48-2-0 (29 KOs)
- **6.** **ROBERT HELENIUS** Finland | 18-0-0 (11 KOs)
- **7.** **DENIS BOYTSOV** Russia | 31-0-0 (25 KOs)
- **8.** **RUSLAN CHAGAEV** Uzbekistan | 30-2-1 (19 KOs)
- **9.** **CHRIS ARREOLA** U.S. | 35-2-0 (30 KOs)
- **10.** **TYSON FURY** UK | 20-0-0 (14 KOs)

CRUISERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 200 LBS

- **C** **YOAN PABLO HERNANDEZ** Cuba | 27-1-0 (13 KOs)
- **1.** **MARCO HUCK** Germany | 35-2-1 (25 KOs)
- **2.** **KRZYSZTOF WLODARCZYK** Poland | 47-2-1 (33 KOs)
- **3.** **OLA AFOLABI** UK | 19-2-4 (9 KOs)
- **4.** **DENIS LEBEDEV** Russia | 25-1-0 (19 KOs)
- **5.** **LATEEF KAYODE** Nigeria | 18-0-0 (14 KOs)
- **6.** **MATEUSZ MASTERNAK** Poland | 29-0-0 (21 KOs)
- **7.** **TROY ROSS** Canada | 25-3-0 (16 KOs)
- **8.** **FIRAT ARSLAN** Germany | 32-6-2 (21 KOs)
- **9.** **DMYTRO KUCHER** Ukraine | 19-0-0 (15 KOs)
- **10.** **RAKHIM CHAKHKIEV** Russia | 116-0-0 (12 KOs)

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 175 LBS

- **C** **CHAD DAWSON** U.S. | 31-2-0 (17 KOs)
- **1.** **BERNARD HOPKINS** U.S. | 52-6-2 (32 KOs)
- **2.** **TAVORIS CLOUD** U.S. | 24-0-0 (19 KOs)
- **3.** **GABRIEL CAMPILLO** Spain | 21-4-1 (8 KOs)
- **4.** **NATHAN CLEVERLY** UK | 25-0-0 (12 KOs)
- **5.** **BEIBUT SHUMENOV** Kazakhstan | 13-1-0 (8 KOs)
- **6.** **KARO MURAT** Germany | 25-1-1 (15 KOs)
- **7.** **ISAAC CHILEMBA** Malawi | 19-1-1 (9 KOs)
- **8.** **JUERGEN BRAEHMER** Germany | 38-2-0 (30 KOs)
- **9.** **TONY BELLEW** UK | 19-1-0 (12 KOs)
- **10.** **JEAN PASCAL** Canada | 27-2-1 (16 KOs)

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 168 LBS

- **C** **ANDRE WARD** U.S. | 26-0-0 (14 KOs)
- **1.** **CARL FROCH** UK | 30-2-0 (22 KOs)
- **2.** **MIKKEL KESSLER** Denmark | 46-2-0 (35 KOs)
- **3.** **LUCIAN BUTE** Romania | 31-1-0 (24 KOs)
- **4.** **THOMAS OOSTHUIZEN** South Africa | 21-0-1 (13 KOs)
- **5.** **ARTHUR ABRAHAM** Armenia | 36-3-0 (28 KOs)
- **6.** **ROBERT STIEGLITZ** Russia | 42-3-0 (23 KOs)
- **7.** **GEORGE GROVES** UK | 16-0-0 (12 KOs)
- **8.** **SAKIO BIKA** Camaroon | 30-5-2 (21 KOs)
- **9.** **ADONIS STEVENSON** Canada | 19-1-0 (16 KOs)
- **10.** **EDWIN RODRIGUEZ** Dominican Rep. | 22-0-0 (15 KOs)

RATINGS

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 160 LBS

C **SERGIO MARTINEZ**
Argentina | 50-2-2 (28 KOs)

1. **DANIEL GEALE**
Australia | 28-1-0 (15 KOs)
2. **FELIX STURM**
Germany | 37-3-2 (16 KOs)
3. **GENNADY GOLOVKIN**
Kazakhstan | 24-0-0 (21 KOs)
4. **JULIO CESAR CHAVEZ JR.**
Mexico | 46-1-1 (32 KOs)
5. **DMITRY PIROG**
Russia | 20-0-0 (15 KOs)
6. **MATTHEW MACKLIN**
UK | 29-4-0 (20 KOs)
7. **PETER QUILLIN**
U.S. | 28-0-0 (20 KOs)
8. **MARTIN MURRAY**
UK | 25-0-1 (11 KOs)
9. **HASSAN N'DAM**
France | 27-1-0 (17 KOs)
10. **GRZEGORZ PROKSA**
Poland | 28-2-0 (21 KOs)

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 154 LBS

C **VACANT**

1. **FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.**
U.S. | 43-0-0 (26 KOs)
2. **SAUL ALVAREZ**
Mexico | 41-0-1 (30 KOs)
3. **AUSTIN TROUT**
U.S. | 26-0-0 (14 KOs)
4. **MIGUEL COTTO**
Puerto Rico | 37-4-0 (30 KOs)
5. **ERISLANDY LARA**
Cuba | 17-1-2 (11 KOs)
6. **VANES MARTIROSYAN**
U.S. | 32-0-1 (20 KOs)
7. **CARLOS MOLINA**
Mexico | 20-5-2 (6 KOs)
8. **JAMES KIRKLAND**
U.S. | 31-1-0 (27 KOs)
9. **CORNELIUS BUNDRAGE**
U.S. | 32-4-0 (19 KOs)
10. **ZAURBEK BAYSANGUROV**
Russia | 28-1-0 (20 KOs)

WELTERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 147 LBS

C **VACANT**

1. **FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.**
U.S. | 43-0-0 (26 KOs)
2. **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ**
Mexico | 55-6-1 (40 KOs)
3. **ROBERT GUERRERO**
U.S. | 31-1-1 (18 KOs)
4. **MANNY PACQUIAO**
Philippines | 54-5-2 (38 KOs)
5. **KELL BROOK**
UK | 29-0-0 (19 KOs)
6. **PAULIE MALIGNAGGI**
U.S. | 32-4-0 (7 KOs)
7. **JAN ZAVECK**
Slovenia | 32-2-0 (18 KOs)
8. **TIMOTHY BRADLEY**
U.S. | 29-0-0 (12 KOs)
9. **VICTOR ORTIZ**
U.S. | 29-4-2 (22 KOs)
10. **DEVON ALEXANDER**
U.S. | 24-1-0 (13 KOs)

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 140 LBS

C **DANNY GARCIA**
U.S. | 25-0-0 (16 KOs)

1. **LUCAS MATTHYSSE**
Argentina | 32-2-0 (30 KOs)
2. **AMIR KHAN**
UK | 27-3-0 (19 KOs)
3. **ZAB JUDAH**
U.S. | 42-7-0 (29 KOs)
4. **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ**
Mexico | 55-6-1 (40 KOs)
5. **BRANDON RIOS**
U.S. | 31-0-1 (23 KOs)
6. **KHABIB ALLAKHVERDIEV**
Russia | 18-0-0 (8 KOs)
7. **MIKE ALVARADO**
U.S. | 33-1-0 (23 KOs)
8. **DENIS SHAFIKOV**
Russia | 31-0-1 (17 KOs)
9. **CESAR CUENCA**
Argentina | 43-0-0 (1 KO)
10. **RUSLAN PROVODNIKOV**
Russia | 22-1-0 (15 KOs)

LIGHTWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 135 LBS

C **VACANT**

1. **ADRIEN BRONER**
U.S. | 25-0-0 (21 KOs)
2. **MIGUEL VAZQUEZ**
Mexico | 33-3-0 (13 KOs)
3. **ANTONIO DEMARCO**
Mexico | 28-3-1 (21 KOs)
4. **RICKY BURNS**
UK | 35-2-0 (10 KOs)
5. **RICHARD ABRIL**
Cuba | 17-3-1 (8 KOs)
6. **GAVIN REES**
UK | 37-1-1 (18 KOs)
7. **SHARIF BOGERE**
Uganda | 23-0-0 (15 KOs)
8. **KEVIN MITCHELL**
UK | 33-2-0 (24 KOs)
9. **RAYMUNDO BELTRAN**
Mexico | 27-6-0 (17 KOs)
10. **DANIEL ESTRADA**
Mexico | 30-2-1 (22 KOs)

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 130 LBS

C **VACANT**

1. **TAKASHI UCHIYAMA**
Japan | 18-0-1 (15 KOs)
2. **JUAN CARLOS SALGADO**
Mexico | 26-1-1 (16 KOs)
3. **ROMAN MARTINEZ**
Puerto Rico | 26-1-1 (16 KOs)
4. **YURIORKIS GAMBOA**
Cuba | 22-0-0 (16 KOs)
5. **DIEGO MAGDALENO**
U.S. | 23-0-0 (9 KOs)
6. **ARGENIS MENDEZ**
Dominican Rep. | 20-2-0 (10 KOs)
7. **JUAN CARLOS BURGOS**
Mexico | 30-1-0 (20 KOs)
8. **GAMALIEL DIAZ**
Mexico | 37-9-2 (17 KOs)
9. **TAKAHIRO AO**
Japan | 23-3-1 (10 KOs)
10. **BRYAN VAZQUEZ**
Costa Rica | 29-0-0 (15 KOs)

FEATHERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 126 LBS

C **VACANT**

1. **ORLANDO SALIDO**
Mexico | 39-11-2 (27 KOs)
2. **CHRIS JOHN**
Indonesia | 48-0-2 (22 KOs)
3. **MIKEY GARCIA**
U.S. | 30-0-0 (26 KOs)
4. **DANIEL PONCE DE LEON**
Mexico | 44-4-0 (35 KOs)
5. **BILLY DIB**
Australia | 35-1-0 (21 KOs)
6. **JHONNY GONZALEZ**
Mexico | 52-8-0 (45 KOs)
7. **JUAN MANUEL LOPEZ**
Puerto Rico | 31-2-0 (28 KOs)
8. **CELESTINO CABALLERO**
Panama | 36-4-0 (23 KOs)
9. **DAUD YORDAN**
Indonesia | 30-2-0 (23 KOs)
10. **NICHOLAS WALTERS**
Jamaica | 22-0-0 (18 KOs)

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 122 LBS

C **NONITO DONAIRE**
Philippines | 31-1-0 (20 KOs)

1. **GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX**
Cuba | 11-0-0 (8 KOs)
2. **ABNER MARES**
U.S. | 25-0-1 (13 KOs)
3. **JEFFREY MATHEBULA**
South Africa | 26-4-2 (14 KOs)
4. **RICO RAMOS**
U.S. | 21-1-0 (11 KOs)
5. **ALEXANDER BAKHTIN**
Russia | 30-0-0 (11 KOs)
6. **CARL FRAMPTON**
UK | 15-0-0 (10 KOs)
7. **TOMOKI KAMEDA**
Japan | 26-0-0 (17 KOs)
8. **VIC DARCHINYAN**
Armenia | 38-5-1 (27 KOs)
9. **SCOTT QUIGG**
UK | 25-0-1 (18 KOs)
10. **HOZUMI HASEGAWA**
Japan | 31-4-0 (13 KOs)

HOW OUR RATINGS ARE COMPILED

Championship vacancies can be filled in the following two ways: 1. THE RING's Nos. 1 and 2 contenders fight one another; 2. If the Nos. 1 and 2 contenders chose not to fight one another and either of them fights No. 3, No. 4 or No. 5, the winner may be awarded THE RING belt if the Editorial Board deems the contenders worthy.

A champion can lose his belt in six situations: 1. The Champion loses a fight in the weight class in which he is champion; 2. The Champion moves to another weight class; 3. The Champion does not schedule a fight in any weight class for 18 months; 4. The Champion does not schedule a fight at his championship weight for 18 months (even if he fights at another weight); 5. The Champion does not schedule a fight with a Top-5 contender from any weight class for two years; 6. The Champion retires.

THE RING Ratings Chairman Chuck Giampa considers input from the Ratings Panel of boxing journalists from around the world but has final say on all changes. That applies to both the pound-for-pound and divisional ratings.

Records provided by boxrec.com

THE RING RATINGS

BANTAMWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 118 LBS

C **VACANT**

1. **ANSELMO MORENO**
Panama | 33-2-1 (12 KOs)
2. **SHINSUKE YAMANAKA**
Japan | 23-0-1 (13 KOs)
3. **LEO SANTA CRUZ**
Mexico | 23-0-1 (13 KOs)
4. **KOKI KAMEDA**
Japan | 29-1-0 (17 KOs)
5. **MALCOLM TUNACAO**
Philippines | 32-2-3 (20 KOs)
6. **HUGO RUIZ**
Mexico | 31-2-0 (28 KOs)
7. **PUNGLUANG SOR SINGYU**
Thailand | 43-1-0 (28 KOs)
8. **JULIO CEJA**
Mexico | 23-0-0 (21 KOs)
9. **RYOSUKE IWASA**
Japan | 13-1-0 (9 KOs)
10. **JAMIE MCDONNELL**
UK | 20-2-1 (9 KOs)

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 115 LBS

C **VACANT**

1. **OMAR NARVAEZ**
Argentina | 38-1-2 (20 KOs)
2. **TEPPARITH SINGWANCHA**
Thailand | 21-2-0 (13 KOs)
3. **YOTA SATO**
Japan | 25-2-1 (12 KOs)
4. **SURIYAN SOR RUNGVISAI**
Thailand | 23-5-1 (9 KOs)
5. **JUAN CARLOS SANCHEZ JR.**
Mexico | 15-1-1 (8 KOs)
6. **CARLOS CUADRAS**
Mexico | 27-0-0 (22 KOs)
7. **RYO AKAHO**
Japan | 19-0-2 (12 KOs)
8. **NOBUO NASHIRO**
Japan | 18-5-1 (12 KOs)
9. **RODEL MAYOL**
Philippines | 31-6-2 (22 KOs)
10. **OLEYDONG SITHSAMERCHAI**
Thailand | 44-1-1 (16 KOs)

FLYWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 112 LBS

C **TOSHIYUKI IGARASHI**
Japan | 17-1-1 (10 KOs)

1. **BRIAN VILORIA**
U.S. | 32-3-0 (19 KOs)
2. **HERNAN MARQUEZ**
Mexico | 34-3-0 (25 KOs)
3. **MORUTI MTHALANE**
S. Africa | 29-2-0 (20 KOs)
4. **SONNY BOY JARO**
Philippines | 34-11-5 (24 KOs)
5. **MILAN MELINDO**
Philippines | 28-0-0 (11 KOs)
6. **ROCKY FUENTES**
Philippines | 35-6-2 (20 KOs)
7. **JUAN CARLOS REVECO**
Argentina | 29-1-0 (16 KOs)
8. **EDGAR SOSA**
Mexico | 47-7-0 (28 KOs)
9. **LUIS CONCEPCION**
Panama | 27-3-0 (20 KOs)
10. **FROILAN SALUDAR**
Philippines | 16-0-1 (11 KOs)

JR. FLYWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 108 LBS

C **VACANT**

1. **ROMAN GONZALEZ**
Nicaragua | 34-0-0 (28 KOs)
2. **DONNIE NIETES**
Philippines | 31-1-3 (17 KOs)
3. **ADRIAN HERNANDEZ**
Mexico | 25-2-1 (16 KOs)
4. **ULISES SOLIS**
Mexico | 35-2-3 (22 KOs)
5. **MASAYUKI KURODA**
Japan | 21-3-2 (13 KOs)
6. **KOMPAYAK PORPRAMOOK**
Thailand | 47-4-0 (32 KOs)
7. **RYO MIYAZAKI**
Japan | 17-0-3 (10 KOs)
8. **JOHNRIEL CASIMERO**
Philippines | 17-2-0 (10 KOs)
9. **RYOICHI TAGUCHI**
Japan | 17-1-1 (8 KOs)
10. **ALBERTO ROSSEL**
Peru | 29-8-0 (13 KOs)

STRAWWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 105 LBS

C **VACANT**

1. **KAZUTO IOKA**
Japan | 10-0-0 (6 KOs)
2. **MOISES FUENTES**
Mexico | 16-1-0 (8 KOs)
3. **RAUL GARCIA**
Mexico | 33-2-1 (21 KOs)
4. **DENVER CUELLO**
Philippines | 32-4-6 (21 KOs)
5. **WANHENG MENAYOTHIN**
Thailand | 25-0-0 (8 KOs)
6. **MARIO RODRIGUEZ**
Mexico | 15-6-4 (11 KOs)
7. **NKOSINATHI JOYI**
South Africa | 23-1-0 (16 KOs)
8. **AKIRA YAEGASHI**
Japan | 15-3-0 (8 KOs)
9. **HEKKIE BUDLER**
South Africa | 21-1-0 (6 KOs)
10. **CARLOS BUITRAGO**
Nicaragua | 24-0-0 (15 KOs)

POUND FOR POUND

1. **FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR**
U.S. | 43-0-0 (26 KOs) | WELTERWEIGHT/ JR. MIDDLEWEIGHT
2. **ANDRE WARD**
U.S. | 26-0-0 (14 KOs) | SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHT
3. **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ**
Mexico | 55-6-1 (40 KOs) | JR. WELTERWEIGHT/ WELTERWEIGHT
4. **SERGIO MARTINEZ**
Argentina | 50-2-2 (28 KOs) | MIDDLEWEIGHT
5. **NONITO DONAIRE**
Philippines | 31-1-0 (20 KOs) | JR. FEATHERWEIGHT
6. **ADRIEN BRONER**
U.S. | 25-0-0 (21 KOs) | LIGHTWEIGHT
7. **MANNY PACQUIAO**
Philippines | 54-5-2 (38 KOs) | WELTERWEIGHT
8. **WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO**
Ukraine | 59-3-0 (50 KOs) | HEAVYWEIGHT
9. **TIMOTHY BRADLEY**
U.S. | 29-0-0 (12 KOs) | WELTERWEIGHT
10. **ROBERT GUERRERO**
U.S. | 31-1-1 (18 KOs) | WELTERWEIGHT

Image: Scott Halleran-Getty

THE RING POLICY ON RATED BOXERS WHO TEST POSITIVE FOR PERFORMANCE-ENHANCING DRUGS

THE RING will remove from its ratings any rated boxer — including a champion — if such boxer at some point undergoes drug testing (Olympic-style or otherwise) and that boxer tests positive for a performance-enhancing drug.

In the event that a boxer has undergone testing in which the boxer provides two samples ("A" and "B") and the boxer's "A" and subsequent "B" samples test positive for a performance-enhancing drug or if his "A" sample tests positive and he waives his right to have the "B" sample tested then the boxer shall immediately be removed from the ratings.

A boxer whose "A" sample tested positive and is awaiting the results of his "B" sample will not be allowed to fight for a championship or rise in the ratings.

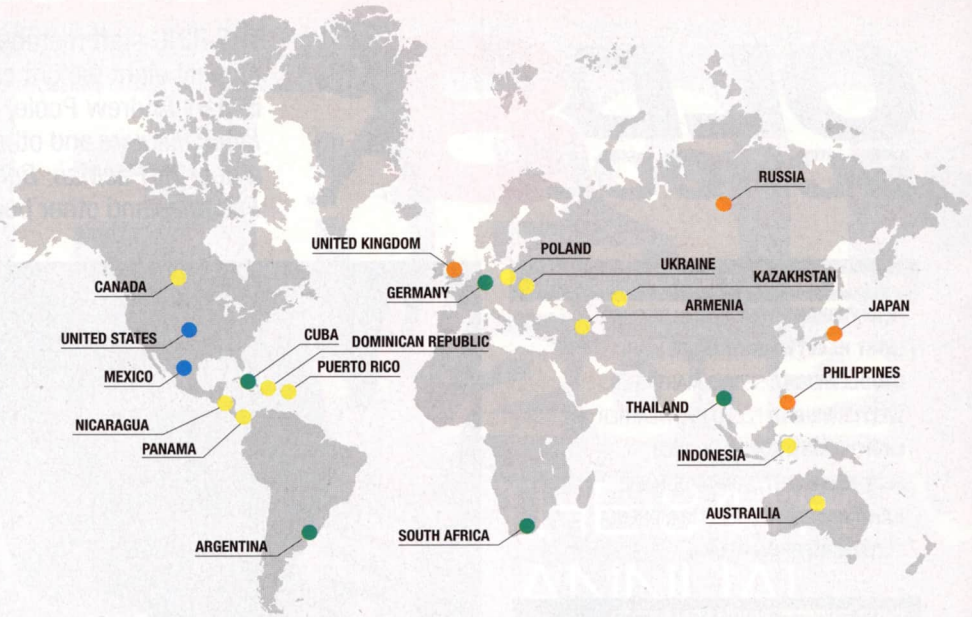
A boxer who is removed because of a positive test will have the opportunity to earn his way back into the ratings after any suspension period is completed.

A boxer who is dropped also may be reinstated if the testing agency subsequently reverses its decision or a court of competent jurisdiction finds that the test result was invalid.

RATED FIGHTERS BY COUNTRY

MEXICO	27-*
UNITED STATES	27-*
UNITED KINGDOM	17
JAPAN	16
PHILIPPINES	11
RUSSIA	11
THAILAND	6
ARGENTINA	5
CUBA	5
GERMANY	5
SOUTH AFRICA	5
POLAND	4
CANADA	3
PANAMA	3
PUERTO RICO	3
UKRAINE	3
ARMENIA	2
AUSTRALIA	2
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	2
INDONESIA	2
KAZAKHSTAN	2
NICARAGUA	2
BULGARIA	1
CAMEROON	1
COSTA RICA	1
DENMARK	1
FINLAND	1
FRANCE	1
JAMAICA	1
MALAWI	1
NIGERIA	1
PERU	1
ROMANIA	1
SLOVENIA	1
SPAIN	1
UGANDA	1
UZBEKISTAN	1

**Includes two ratings for Floyd Mayweather Jr. (junior middleweight, welterweight) and Juan Manuel Marquez (welterweight and junior welterweight).*



NORTH VS. SOUTH

No, this isn't a Civil War reenactment. It's a comparison of the rated fighters from the Northern and Southern Hemispheres. Of course, the vast majority of boxers come from the more-populated north. However, countries in the Southern Hemisphere such as Argentina and South Africa have strong boxing traditions. Here's how countries from north and south, as well as those that are partly in both, compare.

DIVISION	NO.	SO.	BOTH
HEAVYWEIGHTS	11	0	0
CRUISERWEIGHTS	11	0	0
LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS	10	1	0
SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS	10	1	0
MIDDLEWEIGHTS	9	2	0
JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS	10	0	0
WELTERWEIGHTS	10	0	0
JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS	9	2	0
LIGHTWEIGHTS	9	0	1
JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS	10	0	0
FEATHERWEIGHTS	7	1	2
JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS	10	1	0
BANTAMWEIGHTS	10	0	0
JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS	9	1	0
FLYWEIGHTS	9	2	0
JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS	9	1	0
STRAWWEIGHTS	8	2	0
TOTALS	161	14	3

Note: *These are the countries in the Southern Hemisphere with rated fighters – Argentina (5), South Africa (5), Australia (2), Malawi (1) and Peru (1). These are countries that are partly in both – Indonesia (2) and Uganda (1).*

NOTE: *The country of fighters who have spent large portions of their lives in two countries was determined primarily by where they spent the bulk of their childhood.*

TIED AT THE TOP

Mexico has caught the U.S. For the first time since our Ratings by Country debuted in March 2012, the U.S does not stand alone as the country with the most rated fighters: The U.S. and Mexico are tied at 27 apiece. Here is how the race has gone month by month.

MONTH	U.S.	MEXICO
MARCH 2013	27	27
FEB. 2013	28	26
JAN. 2013	29	27
DEC. 2012	29	28
NOV. 2012	31	27
OCT. 2012	32	27
SEPT. 2012	35	27
AUG. 2012	33	27
JULY 2012	29	28
JUNE 2012	33	27
MAY 2012	33	30
APRIL 2012	34	30
MARCH 2012	33	29

Note: *In the past month, Mexico gained two fighters and lost one. Juan Manuel Marquez entered the welterweight ratings after his knockout of Manny Pacquiao. Marquez also is rated at junior welterweight. And Daniel Estrada entered the lightweight ratings. The U.S. lost a fighter when Andre Dirrell was dropped from the super middleweight ratings because of inactivity.*

OLD SCHOOL 8

THE RING staff members' current champions in the original eight weight classes. Our guest this month is Gary Andrew Poole, who writes for *TIME*, *The Atlantic*, *Esquire* and other publications. He also is the author of *PacMan: Behind The Scenes With Manny Pacquiao* and other books.

MICHAEL ROSENTHAL RING MAGAZINE EDITOR
- **HEAVYWEIGHT:** WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO
- **LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT:** ANDRE WARD
- **MIDDLEWEIGHT:** SERGIO MARTINEZ
- **WELTERWEIGHT:** FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.
- **LIGHTWEIGHT:** ADRIEN BRONER
- **FEATHERWEIGHT:** NONITO DONAIRE
- **BANTAMWEIGHT:** ANSELMO MORENO
- **FLYWEIGHT:** BRIAN VILORIA

DOUG FISCHER RINGTV.COM EDITOR
- **HEAVYWEIGHT:** WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO
- **LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT:** ANDRE WARD
- **MIDDLEWEIGHT:** SERGIO MARTINEZ
- **WELTERWEIGHT:** FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.
- **LIGHTWEIGHT:** ADRIEN BRONER
- **FEATHERWEIGHT:** NONITO DONAIRE
- **BANTAMWEIGHT:** ANSELMO MORENO
- **FLYWEIGHT:** BRIAN VILORIA

LEM SATTERFIELD STAFF WRITER
- **HEAVYWEIGHT:** WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO
- **LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT:** ANDRE WARD
- **MIDDLEWEIGHT:** SERGIO MARTINEZ
- **WELTERWEIGHT:** FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.
- **LIGHTWEIGHT:** ADRIEN BRONER
- **FEATHERWEIGHT:** ABNER MARES
- **BANTAMWEIGHT:** ANSELMO MORENO
- **FLYWEIGHT:** BRIAN VILORIA

GARY ANDREW POOLE AUTHOR, BOXING WRITER
- **HEAVYWEIGHT:** WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO
- **LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT:** ANDRE WARD
- **MIDDLEWEIGHT:** FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.
- **WELTERWEIGHT:** FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.
- **LIGHTWEIGHT:** ADRIEN BRONER
- **FEATHERWEIGHT:** NONITO DONAIRE
- **BANTAMWEIGHT:** ANSELMO MORENO
- **FLYWEIGHT:** BRIAN VILORIA

Note: *These lists were compiled through fights of Dec. 22. This is how the weights break down: Heavyweight includes cruiserweight, light heavyweight includes super middleweight, all divisions middleweight through flyweight include the "junior" versions, and flyweight also includes strawweight.*

Image: Jay Directo-AFP-Getty

Flyweight Brian Viloria, 32, seems to be getting better with age.

THE BEST OF 2012

THE 84TH ANNUAL RING AWARDS

Image: John Gurzinski-AFP-Getty

Juan Manuel Marquez knocked Manny Pacquiao onto his back in the third round, a prelude of what was to come.
Image: Al Bello-Getty

FIGHTER OF THE YEAR ////

JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ

By: **Michael Rosenthal**

Juan Manuel Marquez won only two fights in 2012, including one – a decision over Sergei Fedchenko in Mexico – that wasn't a big event. That sort of production normally wouldn't lead to RING Fighter of the Year honors.

And rumors that Marquez had taken performance-enhancing drugs before his other fight, as speculative as they were, also gave us pause when considering Marquez for the award.

The bottom line was this, though: Marquez's one-punch knockout of one of the two most-celebrated boxers of this generation was an historic achievement that superseded everything and everyone else.

Marquez the Fighter of the Year? That would've seemed very unlikely going into his fourth fight against Pacquiao on Dec. 8 at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas.

No one would've been shocked if he had won; many thought he deserved the decision in each of their previous three meetings. And, of course, Marquez (55-6-1, 40 knockouts) also is one of the best of his era.

It was the WAY that Marquez ended matters that landed him in this position.

Pacquiao might've slipped to some degree in recent fights. Age, wear and tear and countless distractions can take a toll. Still, he remains one of the best in the world and had lost only once – a controversial decision against Tim Bradley in his previous fight – in seven years.

And the thought of him lying unconscious was unfathomable, particularly against an opponent not known for one-punch knockout power. Then it happened with seconds to go in the sixth round – a right counterpunch, Pacquiao lying motionless flat on his face, the pro-Marquez crowd in a tizzy, the fight suddenly and oh-so-dramatically over.

Marquez not only defeated the great Manny Pacquiao, he did it in the most-spectacular fashion possible – by a one-punch knockout that will reverberate through the sport for years to come.

The steroid speculation? It's understandable given his physique and the age in which we live, when fitness gurus are often able to stay a step ahead of the testing process.

However, is that fair to Marquez? What if he didn't cheat? Should he be punished because we have suspicions about him or because he is associated with someone once involved with PEDs?

We saw what we saw, a knockout of a great fighter that we'll never forget. Afterward, authorities assured us that he passed his drug tests. That's all we can expect. As a result, he deserves all the accolades that come with such a monumental feat.

RUNNERS UP ////

Image: Scott Halleran-Getty

NONITO DONAIRE (4-0, 2 KOS)
Donaire had an incredible year. He outpointed rising young star Wilfredo Vazquez Jr., unified two junior featherweight titles by topping Jeffrey Mathebula, won THE RING belt by stopping No. 1-rated Toshiaki Nishioka and stopped always-tough Jorge Arce.

ADRIEN BRONER (3-0, 3 KOS)
Broner's knockout of Antonio DeMarco stamped him as a potential superstar. He also KO'd capable Eloy Perez and Vicente Escobedo.

BRIAN VILORIA (2-0, 2 KOS)
Is Viloria getting better with age? The 32-year-old stopped Omar Nino and Hernan Marquez. He unified two flyweight titles in a thriller against Marquez.

DANNY GARCIA (3-0, 2 KOS)
Garcia went from fringe contender to star. He won a major junior welterweight title by outpointing Erik Morales, won THE RING's belt with a stunning KO of Amir Khan and then stopped Morales.

The fight between Juan Manuel Marquez (right) and Manny Pacquiao was a gripping contest even before the knockout.
Image: Al Bello-Getty

FIGHT OF THE YEAR ////

MARQUEZ VS. PACQUIAO IV

By: **Bart Barry**

Before the fourth fight of a series Filipino Manny Pacquiao led 2-0-1, both Pacquiao and Mexican Juan Manuel Marquez promised to chase a knockout wherever it took them. This was nothing new. Men pledge to pursue knockouts in most every prefight press conference, mimicking promoters' puffery. What made Marquez-Pacquiao IV different, what makes Pacquiao and Marquez unique among even elite fighters, is that each man then did as promised, pursuing the other's unconsciousness recklessly, in an unspoken pledge that went: One of us will be knocked out tonight, and I don't much care if it's me.

It was Pacquiao whom fate chose. Marquez knocked him cold at 2:59 of Round 6.

Because of what Marquez and Pacquiao did to one another in a welterweight fight on Dec. 8 in the MGM Grand Garden Arena, a new generation of aficionados now has a shortened classic to call its own — a match, like 1985's "The War" between Marvin Hagler and Thomas Hearns, in which two masters of prizefighting's nuances succumb to the moment and make ferocious combat, each trying to break the other with every punch, until one man goes limp.

After he narrowly lost two more opening rounds to his career rival in their fourth fight, Marquez, in Round 3, threw a looped right hand Pacquiao saw and braced for but one that nevertheless arrived with enough unexpected speed and force to deposit the Filipino on his back. Pacquiao rose, banged his gloves together, and with feral eyes pursued Marquez, who circled away wisely.

In the fifth, Pacquiao found Marquez with the same left hand he'd used to drop the Mexican four times in their first 15 rounds together and dropped him once more – though this time in a manner more flashing than injurious. Marquez rose and fought Pacquiao desperately, hitting him with hard counters Pacquiao walked through, goaded by rage at what happened two rounds before. Irony will remember the punch that sent Marquez to the canvas was by no means its round's hardest.

In the sixth, Pacquiao, ahead on all three judges' cards by a point, knocked Marquez to a corner with seconds remaining. Pacquiao prepared to blitz him. Marquez, his back near the ropes and his mind's timer calculating the bell would soon ring, set his weight, lowered his head and threw his life behind a right cross that caught Pacquiao in mid-leap. The punch sent vibrations the length of Pacquiao's body and a halo of perspiration flying off his black hair, and the Filipino congressman was unconscious before his mind sent any message to his hands.

Pacquiao folded under the bottom rope, where he remained motionless for several minutes, his frightened wife trying to swim through the crowded ring to her sleeping husband. Marquez, nose split, face red and bruised, mounted the far turnbuckle, vindicated and euphoric.

"I could have been knocked out at any time," Marquez said afterwards. "I also knew I could knock him out."

From such mindsets historic fights are made.

RUNNERS UP ////

ORLANDO SALIDO VS. JUAN MANUEL LOPEZ II

On March 10, Mexican Orlando "Siri" Salido, a runner-up for THE RING'S 2011 Fighter of the Year, made a violent rematch with Puerto Rican featherweight Juan Manuel Lopez, the man whom Salido, as an underdog, knocked out 11 months before. In another fabulous scrap, Salido once more proved himself the more durable man, stopping Lopez in their rematch at :32 of Round 10.

BRANDON RIOS VS. MIKE ALVARADO

The match junior welterweight Brandon Rios – another runner-up for THE RING'S 2011 Fighter of the Year – made with Mike Alvarado, on Oct. 13, was one that brought a smile to every aficionado's face. It was a can't-miss fight that didn't miss. And neither did many of its combatants' punches. Rios prevailed by technical knockout at 1:57 of Round 7, leaving everyone desirous of a rematch.

BRIAN VILORIA VS. HERNAN MARQUEZ

Because its combatants were flyweights, the Nov. 17 fight between Brian Viloria and Hernan Marquez did not receive the American television audience other fights on this list did. Those who found the 112-pound battle, though, were treated to a rarity: A fight in which a man, Marquez, was felled three times but still scored competitively. Viloria disposed of all scorecards, however, by stopping him at 1:01 of Round 10.

ROBERT GUERRERO VS. ANDRE BERTO

As part of a plan to lure Floyd Mayweather toward a fight with him in 2013, Robert Guerrero, a lightweight titlist as recently as 2011, had first to prove himself at welterweight. He did exactly that on Nov. 24, beating two-time welterweight titlist Andre Berto by three scores of 116-110. Guerrero dropped Berto twice in the opening rounds, and then absorbed Berto's fully leveraged uppercuts in the late rounds, to prove himself among boxing's most resilient men.

Is there any doubt about Knockout of the Year? No one who saw Juan Manuel Marquez's KO of Manny Pacquiao will forget it.
Image: Al Bello-Getty

KNOCKOUT OF THE YEAR ////

MARQUEZ KO 6 PACQUIAO

Image: Eric Jamison-Associated Press

This is the punch that put Manny Pacquiao to sleep.

By: **Bernard Fernandez**

Funny how things work out sometimes. Most people – hey, you know who you are – didn't want a fourth pairing of Manny Pacquiao and Juan Manuel Marquez, instead preferring a first showdown between Pacman and Floyd Mayweather Jr.

Marquez finally got his satisfaction after going 0-2-1 in his previous three rumbles with Pacquiao, landing a crushing right hand toward the end of the sixth round to put the Filipino superstar down and completely out in their Dec. 8 slugfest at Las Vegas' MGM Grand. The outcome will likely cause global demand for a Mayweather-Pacquiao megafight to evaporate. But boxing buffs could do a lot worse than a fifth battle involving Pacquiao and Marquez, who clearly bring the best out in each other.

The first three bouts were very close and very entertaining – Marquez insists he deserved to get the decision in all of them – but the fourth time around hinted at a more emphatic finish, with Marquez saying he knew he needed a knockout to win and Pacquiao claiming he also wanted to win inside the distance to remove any doubt as to his superiority over his rawhide-tough Mexican archrival.

Their bold words, as it turned out, were backed up by torrid action. Marquez floored Pacquiao in the third round, Pacquiao dropped Marquez in the fifth, and the two men were exchanging heavy blows in the sixth, with the consensus opinion that Pacquiao was getting the better of those exchanges.

Then Marquez landed his shot heard 'round the world, which sent Pacquiao pitching, face first, onto the canvas, where he remained motionless for several minutes. Referee Kenny Bayless didn't even bother with the formality of a count.

"I was looking for the knockout, and the knockout came," said Marquez. "I feel very happy."

Pacquiao said he thought Marquez was on the verge of being taken out, which is why he allowed himself to get a bit careless. "I never expected that punch," he admitted. "He got me. He got me with a good one. I got hit with a punch I didn't see."

RUNNERS UP ////

MIKKEL KESSLER KO 4
ALLAN GREEN

The mother of all short left hooks was landed by Sugar Ray Robinson to the jaw of Gene Fullmer in the fifth round of their middleweight title bout on May 1, 1957, in Chicago. But Kessler's crushing, compact hook in Round 4 of his bout with Green on May 19 in Copenhagen was a reasonable facsimile.

DANNY GARCIA KO 4
ERIK MORALES

They say Philadelphia fighters come out of their mothers' wombs firing left hooks that can put holes in brick walls. Must be true. Garcia, in retaining his WBC junior welterweight title, apparently ended the career of the Mexican legend with just such an exquisite shot on Oct. 20 at Barclays Center in Brooklyn, N.Y.

SHINSUKE YAMANAKA KO 7
TOMAS ROJAS

Yamanaka, the WBC bantamweight champ, starched Rojas with – do you sense a pattern here? – a left hook that might have dropped Godzilla on this night on Nov. 13 in Miyagi, Japan.

CARL FROCH TKO 5
LUCIAN BUTE

All right, so this wasn't as pure a knockout as those previously listed, but the significance of the bout – Froch, fighting on May 26 in his hometown of Nottingham, England, won a 168-pound belt for the third time – was enough to get it on this list. Bute, the soon-to-be-dethroned IBF super middleweight champion, was taking a battering when referee Earl Brown stepped in to save him from further punishment.

Sergio Martinez (on the canvas) was cruising to a victory over Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. when he ran into a little trouble.
Image: Naoki Fukuda

ROUND OF THE YEAR ////

SERGIO MARTINEZ VS. JULIO CESAR CHAVEZ JR. ROUND 12

By: **Martin Mulcahey**

It is the rarest round that erases 33 minutes of domination and what everyone viewing the fight thought they knew about the boxers presented them. In 11 preceding rounds, Sergio Martinez pummeled and toyed with Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. like the spoiled child Martinez labeled his challenger in the pre-fight buildup. Three consecutive short left hooks and a clubbing right hand in the final round changed everything, knocking Martinez to the canvas and tearing the meniscus muscle of his right knee on the way down. The pro-Chavez crowd sprang to life as their free-swinging man pursued his wounded prey, but in the heat of the firefight Martinez stood his ground and fought back, refusing to run or hold.

Twenty seconds later Martinez was deposited on the canvas again, this time the result of an ill-advised push. This allotted the exhausted Argentine a much-needed reprise before rising to his feet and returning to the fray. In the second half of the classic round, Martinez absorbed more punches of the same force as the ones that put him on his back. Favoring an obviously damaged right leg, Martinez sought the support of the ring ropes to stay upright and find the leverage to throw counter punches between Chavez's looping bombs. For the final 60 seconds, Martinez ducked, dodged and threw punches out of muscle memory as much as self-preservation.

Chavez tried to focus his punches through two reddened and badly swollen eyes. However, to his and the crowd's disappointment, the accuracy of the punches that knocked Martinez down earlier were lacking in the final minute and a half. Plenty of blows landed with resounding thuds, but Martinez saw and rode them out thanks to his supreme conditioning and recuperative powers. The round compelled many watching the scene to recall Julio Cesar Chavez Sr.'s fateful 12th round against Meldrick Taylor 22 years earlier. Chavez the elder revels in the mythology of his classic twelfth round, while Chavez junior could only voice regret in the aftermath: "I was 20 seconds away from knocking him out. I started way too late. I thought I was going to be able to do all night what I did in that final round."

The crowd was as drained emotionally as the boxers were physically when the bell finally sounded an end to the pandemonium. It provided everyone the opportunity to take a deep breath and reflect on the frenzy they witnessed. For 11 monotonous rounds, Chavez Jr. looked lethargic and out of his depth, then a combination of Martinez's experience and Chavez's over-eagerness afforded THE RING middleweight champion the miniscule edge needed to survive a torrid finish. A poignant round that proved you can cram 12 rounds of emotion into a frantic three-minute stanza of sustained drama. If ever a rematch of a one-sided fight can be constructed around one round, this was it.

RUNNERS UP ////

JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ VS. MANNY PACQUIAO, ROUND 5

The sixth round presented finality to this rivalry. The back and forth dynamics of the fifth – during which Pacquiao scored a knockdown and seemed to hurt Marquez in the final seconds – gave fans reason to wish for another meeting between the Hall of Fame-bound duo.

ADONIS STEVENSON VS. DONOVAN GEORGE, ROUND 5

A classic round does not require Hall of Fame-level boxers. These brawlers engaged in an atomic fifth round in which George roared back from two knockdowns to hurt his tormentor and end the round on equal footing.

TOMASZ ADAMEK VS. TRAVIS WALKER, ROUND 2

Nothing is more compelling than two hard-punching heavyweights gunning for a stoppage simultaneously; these two did that, bookending a thrilling round with hard knockdowns in the first and last twenty seconds.

BRIAN VILORIA VS. HERNAN MARQUEZ, ROUND 5

The fight was slipping away from Marquez when he buckled Viloria's legs with a thunderous hook, but the Mexican was knocked down following up his advantage in a round that displayed the best of both men.

ORLANDO SALIDO VS. JUAN MANUEL LOPEZ II, ROUND 8

A boxing idiom theorizes that every bout features a round in which the loser had a chance to emerge victorious. Round 8, which featured furious infighting, was Lopez's.

UPSET OF THE YEAR ////

JARO KO 6 WONJONGKAM

Sonny Boy Jaro (above right) was given little chance of doing this (left) to veteran Pongsaklek Wonjongkam.

Images: Kazuto Harada

By: **Ryan Songalia**

You'd have been forgiven for dismissing Sonny Boy Jaro as another sacrificial lamb for RING flyweight champion Pongsaklek Wonjongkam heading into their March 2 fight in Chonburi, Thailand. The Thai boxing legend had lost just once in the previous 16 years, dominating the 112-pound division for more than a decade and defeating nine past or present titleholders. Jaro, of Silay City, Philippines, had a record of 33-10-5, seven of those defeats by knockout, and was preparing for a career transporting passengers in a motorcycle tricycle if he didn't win the title.

Jaro had twice failed in previous title shots. In the first, he dropped Edgar Sosa in a decision-losing effort for the WBC junior flyweight title in 2008, and was then knocked out in a minute by Giovani Segura for the WBA 108-pound title a year later.

At 30, Jaro had a knock on him for being lazy and unmotivated, taking short-notice fights for the money while foregoing training. Yet with mounting bills and two young sons to feed, he decided to make the most of his last chance at a world title.

As the tropical rains in Thailand eased up for the main event, Wonjongkam, 34, entered the outdoor ring for the 88th bout of his professional career. It would turn out to be one too many. Just moments into the fight, Jaro stepped into the southpaw champion with an overhand right followed by a left hook that dropped Wonjongkam to the canvas. Jaro attacked, and Wonjongkam, perhaps off balance due to a slippery canvas, had trouble keeping the distance.

The veteran didn't just lay down, however, offering well-timed counters and hurtful combinations whenever Jaro over-committed with his heavier punches. Still, Jaro's steady pressure began to wear him down, and in the third round a well-timed right hand put Wonjongkam down again.

Sensing a weary adversary in the sixth, Jaro pounced, using body shots to set up an overhand right along the ropes and dropped Wonjongkam on the side of his face. Wonjongkam rose again, but the end was at hand. Jaro resumed his assault, landing more than 20 unanswered shots before the battered champ collapsed and the referee halted the bout.

"Even if the referee counted to 100, he wouldn't get up," Jaro would later say.

Jaro's reign as champion would be brief, as he lost the title just four months later in a razor-thin decision to Japanese mandatory challenger Toshiyuki Igarashi. Wonjongkam would win four straight over nondescript Asian opponents before being knocked out again by a Filipino journeyman, this time Rey Megrino, a fighter he had twice previously defeated. Wonjongkam promptly announced his retirement with a final record of 87-5-2 (46 knockouts).

RUNNERS UP ////

JOSESITO LOPEZ TKO 9 VICTOR ORTIZ

Lopez was seen as relatively easy prey for the bigger Ortiz, who had been scheduled to face Andre Berto before Berto failed a drug test. Ortiz was winning a spirited welterweight fight on all three cards when he failed to come out for the ninth round because of a shattered jaw, which required surgery.

RANDALL BAILEY KO 11 MIKE JONES

Jones, unbeaten at the time, was a rising welterweight contender going into the fight. Bailey remained a big puncher but, at 37, was deemed past his prime. Jones was well ahead on the cards when Bailey put him down toward the end of Round 10 and finished the job with a right uppercut in the 11th.

PAULIE MALIGNAGGI TKO 9 VYACHESLAV SENCHENKO

Conventional wisdom was that Malignaggi had little chance of winning a decision in Ukraine, Senchenko's home country. And, with seven KOs in 36 fights, he sure as hell wasn't going to stop his foe. Surprise, surprise. Senchenko took a beating before the welterweight title fight was stopped.

MARIO RODRIGUEZ KO 7 NKOSINATHI JOYI

Joyi, a tough South African strawweight titleholder, had plowed through a series of top 105-pounders in his homeland. He should stayed there. Joyi ventured to Rodriguez's home country and was promptly stopped in seven rounds by the relatively inexperienced Mexican.

Danny Jacobs won his comeback fight, stopping Josh Luteran, but his toughest battle was with cancer.
Image: Al Bello-Getty

COMEBACK OF THE YEAR ////

DANNY JACOBS

Danny Jacobs needed less than a round to stop Josh Luteran after a 19-month layoff.
Image: Al Bello-Getty

By: **Chris Cozzone**

In the fall of 2010, "The Golden Child's" gilded road led him to a title fight against a little known adversary everyone assumed would fall. "This one's all yours," Jacob's promoter, Oscar De La Hoya, told him as he climbed into the ring.

Well, things didn't work as planned. Twelve minutes and 57 seconds into the fight, Jacobs found himself looking up at the lights and Dmitry Pirog, who held his gloves high in a victory pose. The night would mark an end of one road – a rapid ascent through the rankings – and the beginning of another.

As real fighters do, Jacobs immediately staged a comeback and within five months had reclaimed some semblance of confidence by beating two overmatched foes. Then, in March 2011, Jacobs' aspirations for renewed contention came to a grinding halt when his legs started to do weird things. Temporary weakness became chronic; weakness turned into spasms that metamorphosed into paralysis. It got so bad that Jacobs went from cane to walker to bed.

After a complete medical work-up in April, Jacobs was told he had a tumor the size of a baseball wrapped around his spinal cord. He underwent successful surgery a month later to remove the mass, which was malignant.

A cancer-free Jacobs began the long, long road back to a normal life. Boxing? That, according to the doctors, wasn't looking so good. That's what they thought. That's what everyone thought – everyone but Danny Jacobs.

A painful 17 months of hell followed as Jacobs began a gradual return, first to normalcy, such as using the restroom and walking, then to training.

"I cheated death," Jacobs would later say. But he did more than that. The Brooklynite beat impossible odds by returning to the sport he'd left behind for almost a year and a half.

Jacobs made his long-awaited return to the ring on Oct. 20, stopping Josh Luteran at the new Barclays Center in Brooklyn, N.Y., not far from where he grew up. He then stopped Chris Fitzpatrick on Dec. 1 at Madison Square Garden, a victory that placed him on the edge of contention.

Jacobs was a fairly easy choice for Comeback of Year. He could also have been Most Inspirational.

No longer the "Golden Child," the newly-christened "Miracle Man" still wants to accomplish great things in boxing but now has a more universal goal as well. He wants to be living proof that you should never quit.

RUNNERS UP ////

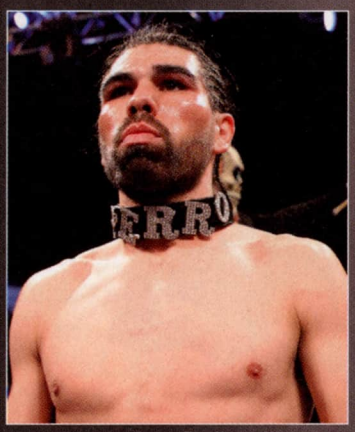


Image: Tom Hogan-Hoganphotos

ALFREDO ANGULO

After seven months in an immigration detention center, following his sole, brutal defeat at the hands of James Kirkland, "Perro" returned to form with two wins over tough Raul Casarez and even-tougher Jorge Silva.

MARK WEINMAN

Knocking out a guy who's 11-30-2 and has dropped his last 10 bouts shouldn't warrant headlines, but New York City's "Hebrew Hammer" did it after a 19-year layoff – and at the age of 50.

CARL FROCH

The oh-so-tough Briton, coming off a humbling loss to pound-for-pounder Andre Ward, bounced back with a stunning knockout of previously unbeaten and favored Lucian Bute and then stopped overmatched Yusaf Mack to reclaim his place among the best in the sport.

PAUL SPADAFORA

Ending a two-year layoff, the former lightweight champ (nearly a decade ago now) who has endured prison, enough tattoo ink to kill an elephant and obscurity, headlined two smokers in West Virginia. He beat two journeymen.

TRAINER OF THE YEAR ////

ROBERT GARCIA

Trainer Robert Garcia (pictured with prize pupils Nonito Donaire, top, and Brandon Rios) is No. 1 for a second consecutive year.
Images: Naoki Fukuda

By: **Doug Fischer**

Robert Garcia's 2012 was as good as Freddie Roach's was bad.

Most of the star fighters trained by the bespectacled hall of famer failed to win a significant fight this past year, while the top dogs of Garcia's ever-expanding stable couldn't lose.

The one exception to Garcia's banner year and Roach's misfortune was the flyweight title-unification fight between Brian Viloria and Hernan Marquez on Nov. 17. Viloria, co-trained by Roach and Marvin Somodio, scored a thrilling 10th-round stoppage of Marquez, who was trained by Garcia.

It should be noted that Viloria was trained by Garcia in 2008 and 2009 (and, in fact, won his second major title with Garcia in April 2009). Garcia trained only one other world-class fighter, featherweight beltholder Steven Luevano, at the time. However, from 2010 to the present, Garcia has added pound-for-pounder Nonito Donaire, former middleweight champ Kelly Pavlik, and welterweight slugger Marcos Maidana to a stable that already included his younger brother Miguel Angel Garcia, who is a top-rated featherweight, and former lightweight beltholder Brandon Rios.

All five fighters were unbeaten with Garcia in their corners in 2012, which is why the former junior lightweight titleholder has repeated as THE RING's Trainer of the Year.

Donaire earned strong Fighter of the Year consideration by unifying two major 122-pound titles with decisions over Wilfredo Vazquez Jr. and Jeffrey Mathebula, winning THE RING's vacant junior featherweight championship with a ninth-round stoppage of Toshiaki Nishioka, and then defending all three belts against Jorge Arce, who he wiped out in three rounds.

Pavlik, who was all but written off after losing his title to Sergio Martinez and checking into rehab for alcohol addiction in 2010, turned in three solid performances – knockouts of journeymen Aaron Jaco and Scott Sigmon and a decision over fringe contender Will Rosinsky. Pavlik, who has added a strong left hook and body attack to his arsenal under Garcia's guidance, is now in line to face super middleweight champ Andre Ward in early 2013.

Maidana began the year by losing a one-sided decision to Devon Alexander in his welterweight debut but the former 140-pound contender rebounded with Garcia's help, scoring a hard-fought TKO over Jesus Soto Karass and a one-punch (body shot) KO of Angel Martinez. Maidana is working his jab more and keeping a higher guard under Garcia's watch.

Rios started off 2012 by edging savvy stylist Richard Abril in a controversial split decision. But the rugged pressure fighter, whom Garcia has trained since the amateurs, redeemed himself with a Fight of the Year-candidate stoppage of previously undefeated Mike Alvarado in his junior welterweight debut.

"Mikey" Garcia remained undefeated (30-0, 26 knockouts), going 3-0 in 2012 with his older brother in his corner. The 25-year-old featherweight is a slight favorite against WBO titleholder Orlando Salido, whom he challenges on Jan. 19.

Garcia was a good fighter but the 37-year-old is proving to be a great trainer.

RUNNERS UP ////

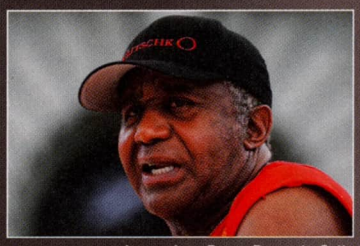


Image: Lars Baron-Bongarts-Getty

EMANUEL STEWARD

The late great trainer coached world heavyweight champ Wladimir Klitschko to two title defenses, including an impressive sixth-round stoppage of dangerous Tony Thompson, and helped junior middleweight beltholder Cornelius Bundrage retain his IBF title against Cory Spinks before passing away too soon.

VIRGIL HUNTER

The trainer of THE RING's 2011 Fighter of the Year, super middleweight champ Andre Ward, added Amir Khan and Alfredo Angulo to a stable that already included 140-pound standouts Karim Mayfield and Mike Dallas Jr. All five fighters were unbeaten with Hunter in their corners.

PABLO SARMIENTO

Sarmiento coached middleweight champ Sergio Martinez to an 11th-round TKO of top contender Matthew Macklin and a unanimous decision over unbeaten beltholder Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. He also trained former light heavyweight titleholder Gabriel Campillo, who was robbed in a decision loss to Tavoris Cloud, and undefeated featherweight contender Javier Fortuna.

ERIC BROWN

The longtime Freddie Roach understudy finally stepped out of Roach's sizable shadow by training Paul Malignaggi and Peter Quillin to major titles.

PROSPECT OF THE YEAR ////

KEITH THURMAN

Keith Thurman made a strong statement against veteran Carlos Quintana on Nov. 24.

Images: Tom Hogan-Hoganphotos

By: **Doug Fischer**

Carlos Quintana had every right to believe that he would be too much for Keith Thurman when they fought in the co-feature to the Robert Guerrero-Andre Berto welterweight fight Nov. 24 on HBO. After all, the former titleholder was fighting on the world-class level when Thurman was still an amateur teenager.

And though Quintana, 36, was no longer in his prime, he proved that he was still dangerous by outclassing and knocking out young junior middleweight fringe contender Deandre Latimore in May.

Quintana, who claimed he had a great camp in Puerto Rico, was so certain that he would do the same to Thurman he used the final press conference for their crossroads match in Ontario, Calif., to call out WBC 154-pound titleholder Saul "Canelo" Alvarez.

Quintana shouldn't have overlooked Thurman, who let the savvy southpaw and the boxing world know that he's for real with a debilitating body shot delivered in the opening round. Quintana was dropped to his hands and knees by the thunderous left hook to his ribcage and barely beat referee Jack Reiss's 10 count. From that point on, Thurman calmly walked Quintana down until he cornered and overwhelmed the tough stick-and-mover with a brutal barrage until Reiss halted the fight at 2:19 of the fourth round.

Thanks to that emphatic victory, the undefeated KO artist's fourth consecutive stoppage in 2012, Thurman (19-0, 18 knockouts) earned THE RING's Prospect of the Year honor.

And while Thurman did not defeat a cadre of world beaters in 2012 – his first three victories came against journeyman Christopher Fernandez (TKO 1), unbeaten Missouri club fighter Brandon Hoskins (TKO 3) and rugged-but-limited Mexican vet Orlando Lora (TKO 6) – he exhibited patience to go with his obvious power and solid boxing technique despite his vow to pursue knockouts in every fight.

His knockout of Quintana should not be underrated. Quintana had been stopped before – in all three of his previous losses – but those setbacks occurred in welterweight title bouts against Miguel Cotto, Andre Berto and Paul Williams, who he upset for the WBO belt in 2008. The 147-pound beltholders had a combined record of 85-1 when Quintana lost to them.

Quintana had never been beaten fighting above welterweight – until he faced Thurman.

There's no telling if Thurman will accomplish as much as Berto and Williams, let alone Cotto, but he has the ingredients that a young fighter needs to develop into a Top-10 contender, including a strong amateur background and world-class trainer in Dan Birmingham.

And his somewhat eccentric look and personality – the long-haired bookworm immerses himself in classic philosophy and religious texts when he's not in the gym – along with his entertaining style ensures that fans will watch him every step of the way.

RUNNERS UP ////

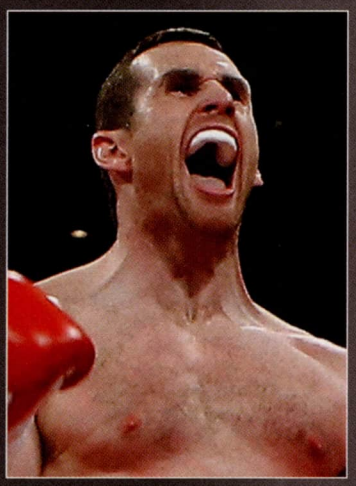


Image: Scott Heavey-Getty

DAVID PRICE (15-0, 13 KOS)
Britain's 2008 Olympic super heavyweight bronze medalist exhibited excellent technique and power in dispatching a quartet of English veterans – John McDermott, Sam Sexton, Audley Harrison and Matt Skelton – in four rounds or less.

BRYANT JENNINGS (16-0, 8 KOS)
The Philadelphia native established himself as one of America's best heavyweight hopes by winning five bouts in 2012, including a ninth-round stoppage of former titleholder Sergei Liakhovich in March.

FRANKIE GAVIN (14-0, 10 KOS)
The popular UK southpaw only fought three times in 2012, but he took a big step in his career (and earned the British welterweight title) with a unanimous decision over former junior welterweight titleholder Junior Witter.

DEONTAY WILDER (26-0, 26 KOS)
The "other" heavyweight bronze medalist from the 2008 Olympic Games extended his impressive KO streak with six stoppages in 2012, including a Knockout of the Year-candidate one-punch blasting of fellow undefeated American Kelvin Price.

Image: Josh Hedges-Getty

Saul "Canelo" Alvarez (left) and Josesito Lopez filled the MGM Grand in Las Vegas on Sept. 15.

EVENT OF THE YEAR ////

SEPT. 15 IN LAS VEGAS

Image: John Gurzinski-AFP-Getty

Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. (left) and Sergio Martinez packed Thomas & Mack Arena the same night Saul Alvarez and Josesito Lopez fought a few miles away in Las Vegas.

By: **Norm Frauenheim**

On a night when it looked as if the Top Rank-Golden Boy feud might push the business over the fistic cliff, two cards collided and produced a number that made it look more bullish than bankrupt. The number: 33,705.

That's the total attendance in Las Vegas for Sept. 15 when middleweight champion Sergio Martinez defeated Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. by a unanimous decision on a Top Rank card in front of 19,186 at Thomas & Mack Center while junior middleweight champ Saul "Canelo" Alvarez scored a fifth-round stoppage of Josesito Lopez in front of 14,519 in a Golden Boy promotion at the MGM Grand.

In the time it took to stand in line for a cab in front of the MGM, you probably could have walked to Thomas & Mack. Only two miles separate the two. But there wasn't a ticket left to sell for either, according to the Nevada State Athletic Commission.

Both were called sellouts, with 12,860 sold by Golden Boy and 16,939 by Top Rank. Golden Boy gave away 1,659 tickets. Top Rank gave away 751. Top Rank's count also included 1,496 credentials for media and other personnel there to work the card.

Total gate for both: $4,670,895. Martinez-Chavez Jr. generated $3,052,745 in ticket sales. The Canelo-Lopez gate was $1,618,150.

Breaking down numbers is a little bit like looking through a prism. Depending on the angle or agenda, they can be seen in multiple ways. During the week before the dueling cards, they were. They were questioned by both camps, which remain separated by a lot more than just a couple of miles.

For one night, however, the rancor was offset by healthy signs for a sport forever said to be on the edge of doom. There was proof of Canelo's drawing power, which promises to be a revenue source for years. A marketable rematch possibility was created when Martinez survived a sudden, dramatic 12th-round challenge from Chavez.

Both fights left two crowds of fans hungry for more. Imagine what both might see if a Top Rank-Golden Boy truce led to a working relationship. But that's another story for another year.

RUNNERS UP ////

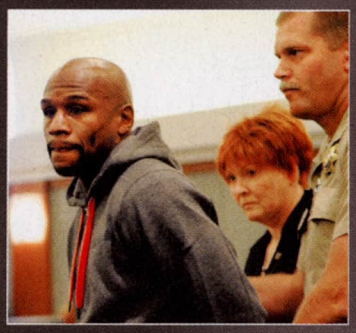


Image: David Becker-Getty

FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR. GOES TO JAIL

He was released on Aug. 3 after serving two months of a three-month sentence for domestic abuse. Not long after, he and 50 Cent split, ending plans for a joint promotional venture.

JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ-MANNY PACQUIAO IV:

Marquez left Pacquiao, Mitt Romney and the rest of the MGM Grand crowd thunderstruck with the right hand that put Pacquiao down, face first, in the final second of the sixth round. Even if no one takes the fifth, IV won't be forgotten.

BRADLEY-PACQUIAO SCORING

Promoter Bob Arum demanded that the Nevada State Athletic Commission investigate scoring that led to Tim Bradley's split-decision victory over Manny Pacquiao on June 9. Attorney General Catherine Cortez Masto dropped the investigation, saying no laws were broken. Incompetence isn't against the law.

RICKY HATTON'S ILL-FATED RETURN

The darling of Manchester, England, and beyond raised hopes that he could recapture the past but Vyacheslav Senchenko had other plans. The Ukrainian sent Hatton back into retirement with a ninth-round knockout.

Al Haymon is in his own league in the world of boxing managers.
Image: Tom Uhlman

MANAGER OF THE YEAR ////

AL HAYMON

Floyd Mayweather Jr. (right) is just one of Al Haymon's many big-name clients.
Image: Frederic J. Brown-AFP-Getty

By: **David Greisman**

He is often villainized and quite polarizing. Those who follow boxing closely often argue that he's not good for the sport. But no one can argue Al Haymon is not very, very good for his fighters' bank accounts.

It is because of his reputation and his results that so many boxers sign with Haymon. And it is because of both the quality and quantity of fighters that he works with that the powerful adviser is THE RING's Manager of the Year for a second consecutive time.

You can look at the other leading candidates, many of whom provided very good years for their clients, but Haymon is simply in a different league. His reach ranges from heavyweight prospects to bantamweight beltholders and includes top titlists and contenders in several divisions.

Floyd Mayweather Jr. headlined one of the year's biggest pay-per-view cards, defeating Miguel Cotto. Adrien Broner appeared on HBO three times and has become boxing's next breakout star. Danny Garcia's trio of wins in 2012 brought him to the top of the junior welterweight division.

And a plethora of boxers who the spotlight was eluding, either because their names were not yet big enough or due to their time having long passed, received airtime on the premium networks. Few would expect Jermain Taylor and Antonio Tarver to be on TV were it not for Haymon's influence, and few would know who Peter Quillin, Keith Thurman and Austin Trout are if Haymon hadn't gotten them their time to shine.

It helps that so many of his fighters appear on Golden Boy Promotions cards, and it helps that Golden Boy is now the promoter of record for so many Showtime broadcasts. One card on that network in June had Haymon fighters in all four featured bouts: Tarver, Trout, Quillin and Leo Santa Cruz.

There are more, of course, including (but not limited to) Devon Alexander, Andre Berto, Josesito Lopez, Gary Russell Jr. and Seth Mitchell. Some of Haymon's fighters had better years than others. But it is because of him that they also had sizable paychecks, title shots and television slots. And it is because of this that several Olympians signed with Haymon upon turning pro.

This isn't to give short shrift to other managers who also deserve acclaim for the work they did on a smaller scale, albeit just as important to their fighters. It is the boxers who receive the lion's share of the rewards and recognition. But it is the manager's role to put the fighter in position to earn them. And no one does that more effectively than Haymon.

RUNNERS UP ////

CAMERON DUNKIN

Dunkin's client Nonito Donaire appeared on HBO four times and ended 2012 as the top fighter in the 122-pound division. He also has Brandon Rios, who topped Mike Alvarado in one of the year's best fights and who could be poised for a major match in 2013. And Dunkin stewarded Timothy Bradley into the biggest fight of his career, a fight with Manny Pacquiao that Bradley won by a highly controversial decision. He also manages featherweight contender Mikey Garcia, who ended the year preparing for a title shot against Orlando Salido in January.

SAMPSON LEWKOWICZ

Lewkowicz's big three of Sergio Martinez, Chris John and Javier Fortuna went a combined 7-0 in 2012. That includes Martinez's victory over Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. in a lucrative showdown and Fortuna's emergence as a contender.

FRANK ESPINOZA

Espinoza has guided Abner Mares to one big fight after another, including two victories in 2012, one over aging Eric Morel and a defining triumph over Anselmo Moreno. Espinoza also works with Daniel Ponce de Leon and a number of young fighters.

BOB SANTOS

Santos has helped Robert Guerrero get past several daunting obstacles to defeat Andre Berto and become a budding star.

Orlando Cruz made himself a pioneer when he announced publicly that he's gay.
Image: Dennis M. Rivera Pichardo

MOST INSPIRATIONAL ////

ORLANDO CRUZ

Image: J. Merici-Getty

Orlando Cruz (right) is on the cusp of a title shot after outpointing Jorge Pazos.

By: **Chris Cozzone**

It will never really matter whether Orlando Cruz straps a major belt around his waist, for he has carved out his legacy in the sweet science by becoming champion of a cause transcending the sport.

In October, the featherweight contender from Puerto Rico defied decades – centuries, really – of machismo and suppression by becoming the first openly gay man in boxing history.

"I'm a proud gay man," he said very simply. "Me being the first active professional boxer to publicly acknowledge my (sexual orientation) might help others to do the same."

Cruz's coming out stunned those in the sport. In the past, only a handful of fighters were rumored to be gay or bisexual. Best known was Emile Griffith, a Hall of Fame welterweight and middleweight champ who fought in the '60s. As a result of the threats he received during his career, it took Griffith decades to tell his story.

"I don't know why others haven't spoken up before," Cruz told THE RING. "Maybe they're scared to do that. Maybe they feel that (by coming out) they somehow won't be respected."

Not so, Cruz.

Equally surprising as Cruz's coming out was the reaction he received from the manly sport of self-defense: Nothing short of complete support – perhaps a sign that the old stereotypes and slurs may be part of the past and not the future.

Not long after making his announcement, Cruz, the whole world watching him now, picked up a minor belt with a decision over Jorge Pazos in the main event on ESPN2. The victory elevated him to No. 2 in the WBO ratings. After Orlando Salido and No. 1 Mikey Garcia settle their differences on Jan. 19, Cruz is expected to get a shot at the winner.

Of course, Cruz has worked much of his life for such an opportunity. A victory would be the crowning achievement of his athletic career, as it would any fighter. To the rest of us, though, he already is a champion.

RUNNERS UP ////

JOHNATHON BANKS

The heavyweight contender took over for his late trainer Emanuel Steward by working the corner of Wladimir Klitschko, who stopped Mariusz Wach on Nov. 10, and then defied the odds by knocking out rising contender Seth Mitchell the following Saturday. Steward would've been proud.

PAUL WILLIAMS

The former welterweight champ, paralyzed as a result of a motorcycle accident on May 27, might've seen the end of his boxing career in 2012. But that didn't stop him from showing up in a wheelchair – and in good spirits – at the Saul Alvarez-Josesito Lopez card on Sept. 15. There, he told the press, "My game ain't over." Williams vows to not only walk again – but to fight.

ROBERT GUERRERO

Consistently updated tales of "The Ghost" may forevermore haunt "Most Inspirational" lists. In the past, Guerrero battled lengthy layoffs to help his wife battle cancer. On Nov. 24, the division-skipping former featherweight and lightweight titleholder took his prowess to new heights when he fought his heart out to defeat Andre Berto.

QUEEN UNDERWOOD

The lightweight from Seattle failed to medal at the Olympics but made history as the first female U.S. Olympic boxer. However, it's her story of overcoming a dark past, including substance abuse and rape, that marks her as an inspiration.

BEST FIGHTER POLL ////

MAYWEATHER BY A LANDSLIDE

By: **Michael Rosenthal**

Floyd Mayweather Jr. turns 36 on Feb. 24, which is old by boxing standards. He's in the 13th year of his boxing career, having turned pro in 1996. He will have fought in three decades, the 1990s, 2000s and 2010s.

Still, nobody on the planet can do it as well as he can. At least that's the consensus of the 10 experts – representing five countries – who took part in THE RING's annual Best Fighter Poll for 2012.

Mayweather (43-0, 26 knockouts) received seven first-place votes, two second-place votes and one fourth-place vote, giving him 136 points and a second consecutive first-place finish. He now has finished atop the poll five times. Only Roy Jones Jr., a six-time winner, has outdone Mayweather.

"Money," as he's known, finished first in three consecutive years – 2005, 2006 and 2007 – before leaving boxing for almost two years.

That hiatus opened the door for Manny Pacquiao to become the No. 1 fighter in the world. The Filipino hero finished atop the poll in 2008, 2009 and 2010. Mayweather regained the top spot last year, narrowly edging Pacquiao 136.5 to 127.5.

And, in light of Pacquiao's stunning knockout loss to Juan Manuel Marquez, no one was in place to challenge Mayweather.

Andre Ward finished second in the voting with 109 points and had the only other first-place vote. Two participants – Norm Frauenheim and Erika Montoya – left the top spot vacant because they didn't believe there was an obvious choice.

Pacquiao, who hadn't finished lower than second since 2006, was sixth on this year's list with 48 points. Marquez (82), Sergio Martinez (76) and Nonito Donaire (53) finished third, fourth and fifth, respectively.

In the poll, the fighters receive points for each vote they receive: 15 points for a first-place vote, 12 for second, nine for third, seven for fourth, six for fifth, five for sixth, four for seventh, three for eighth, two for ninth and one for 10th.

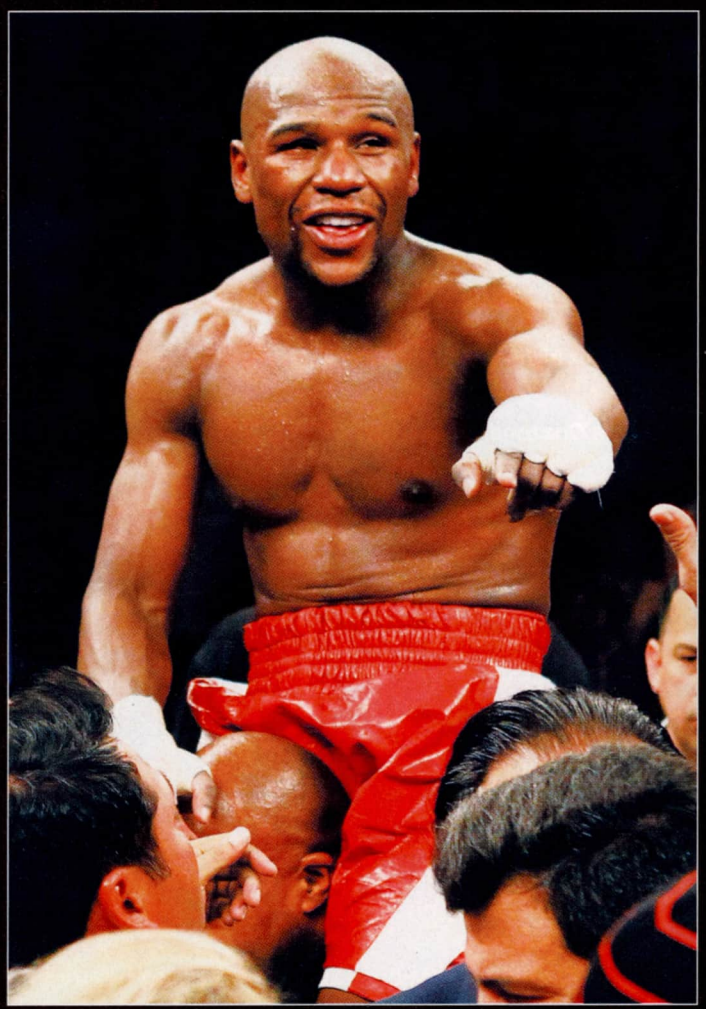


Image: Al Bello-Getty

2012 POLL RESULTS

1. F. Mayweather Jr. 136
2. Andre Ward 109
3. J.M. Marquez 82
4. Sergio Martinez 76
5. Nonito Donaire 53
6. Manny Pacquiao 48
7. Wladimir Klitschko 33
8. Vitali Klitschko 18

9T. Timothy Bradley 14
9T. Carl Froch 14

OTHERS RECEIVING VOTES

Chris John 8, Abner Mares 7, Adrien Broner 4, Robert Guerrero 3, Brian Viloria 3, Anselmo Moreno 2.

Image: Al Bello-Getty

Floyd Mayweather Jr. has five first-place finishes in the Best Fighter Poll.

RON BORGES
Boston Herald

After what Austin Trout did against Miguel Cotto, you have to wonder about Floyd Mayweather Jr. a bit. But until someone proves otherwise inside the ring he remains the best fighter in the world.

1. Floyd Mayweather Jr.
2. Andre Ward
3. Juan Manuel Marquez
4. Sergio Martinez
5. Nonito Donaire
6. Chris John
7. Adrien Broner
8. Manny Pacquiao
9. Carl Froch
10. Timothy Bradley

GARETH A DAVIES
The Daily Telegraph, London

Floyd Mayweather Jr. would have beaten Manny Pacquiao hands down in my book and would even beat Sergio Martinez by my reckoning. I only hope he would take that fight. In spite of inactivity in the ring, he gets better with age. His performance against Miguel Cotto in May was scintillating.

1. Floyd Mayweather Jr.
2. Andre Ward
3. Sergio Martinez
4. Juan Manuel Marquez
5. Manny Pacquiao
6. Wladimir Klitschko
7. Nonito Donaire
8. Chris John
9. Anselmo Moreno
10. Carl Froch

COREY ERDMAN
RingTV.com, Toronto

Floyd Mayweather Jr. has already beaten or would be a huge favorite over any potential opponent. He might wipe out a generation of 154-pounders before he retires.

1. Floyd Mayweather Jr.
2. Juan Manuel Marquez
3. Andre Ward
4. Sergio Martinez
5. Nonito Donaire
6. Manny Pacquiao
7. Wladimir Klitschko
8. Vitali Klitschko
9. Timothy Bradley
10. Abner Mares

NORM FRAUENHEIM
THE RING Magazine, Phoenix

Floyd Mayweather Jr. remained unbeaten and mostly inactive with only a victory over Miguel Cotto in 2012, which isn't enough to re-claim the top spot.

1. Vacant
2. Andre Ward
3. Sergio Martinez
4. Floyd Mayweather Jr.
5. Juan Manuel Marquez
6. Nonito Donaire
7. Wladimir Klitschko
8. Manny Pacquiao
9. Abner Mares
10. Brian Viloria

NICK GIONGCO
Manila Bulletin

Following Manny Pacquiao's loss, it's logical that Floyd Mayweather Jr. gets to the summit. Even though I had him at No. 2 behind Pacquiao for so long, I believed that what separated him and Pacquiao was a strand of hair.

1. Floyd Mayweather Jr.
2. Andre Ward
3. Nonito Donaire
4. Juan Manuel Marquez
5. Sergio Martinez
6. Manny Pacquiao
7. Wladimir Klitschko
8. Vitali Klitschko
9. Carl Froch
10. Timothy Bradley

KEVIN IOLE
Yahoo! Sports

Floyd Mayweather Jr. is slipping, but he's still unbeaten and still has the best combination of offense and defense out there.

1. Floyd Mayweather Jr.
2. Andre Ward
3. Juan Manuel Marquez
4. Nonito Donaire
5. Sergio Martinez
6. Manny Pacquiao
7. Vitali Klitschko
8. Wladimir Klitschko
9. Timothy Bradley
10. Carl Froch

GUNNAR MEINHARDT
Die Welt
Berlin

Mayweather cannot be stopped when puts the gloves on. He's a five-division world champion with a perfect record. His speed and flash in the ring make him the best. He knows that he can beat anybody.

1. Floyd Mayweather Jr.
2. Andre Ward
3. Sergio Martinez
4. Juan Manuel Marquez
5. Wladimir Klitschko
6. Manny Pacquiao
7. Nonito Donaire
8. Vitali Klitschko
9. Carl Froch
10. Timothy Bradley

ERIKA MONTOYA
Milenio Diario
Mexico City

The reason No. 1 is vacant is that Floyd Mayweather Jr. didn't do anything in the past year to deserve it. Mayweather is the best boxer in the world, with his offense, defense and movement in the ring, but his competitive fight against Cotto and then time spent in jail aren't the best way to claim the position.

1. Vacant
2. Floyd Mayweather Jr.
3. Juan Manuel Marquez
4. Sergio Martinez
5. Manny Pacquiao
6. Carl Froch
7. Timothy Bradley
8. Vitali Klitschko
9. Nonito Donaire
10. Andre Ward

DAN RAFAEL
ESPN.com

I rank Floyd Mayweather Jr. No. 1 because it's obvious that he is the best boxer in the sport, as he has a long track record of near-flawless performances against many quality opponents in a variety of weight classes.

1. Floyd Mayweather Jr.
2. Andre Ward
3. Sergio Martinez
4. Juan Manuel Marquez
5. Wladimir Klitschko
6. Nonito Donaire
7. Manny Pacquiao
8. Timothy Bradley
9. Vitali Klitschko
10. Carl Froch

Image: Ezra Shaw

RING super middleweight champ Andre Ward received one first-place vote.

RICK REENO
BoxingScene.com

For the past few years, Andre Ward has been fighting and beating the very best of his loaded weight division. Ward systematically cleaned out his division to the point where a change of scenery to 175 pounds might be necessary to advance to the next level.

1. Andre Ward
2. Floyd Mayweather Jr.
3. Juan Manuel Marquez
4. Sergio Martinez
5. Manny Pacquiao
6. Nonito Donaire
7. Abner Mares
8. Robert Guerrero
9. Brian Viloria
10. Wladimir Klitschko

***NOTE:** Norm Frauenheim and Erika Montoya had the No. 1 position vacant.*

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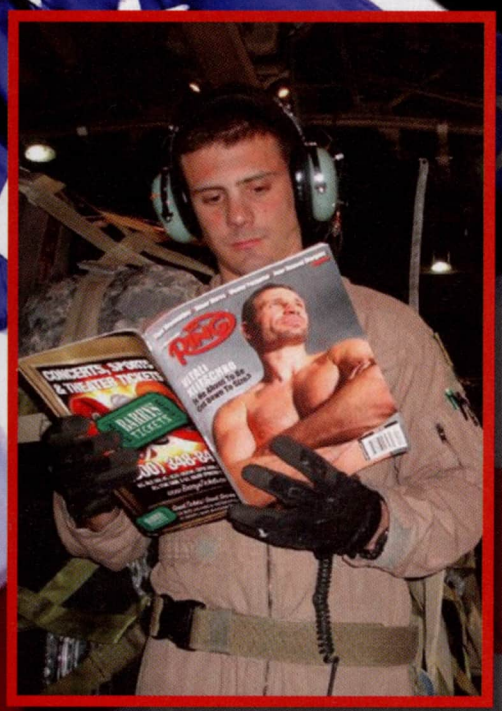

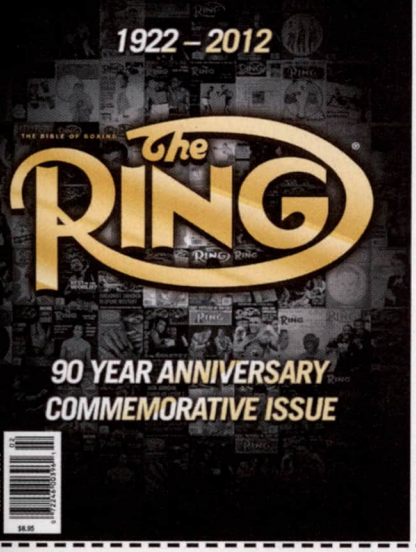

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PAST POLLS ////

2011 POLL
1. Floyd Mayweather Jr. – 136.5
2. Manny Pacquiao – 127.5
3. Sergio Martinez – 80
4. Andre Ward – 65
5. Juan Manuel Marquez – 57
6. Nonito Donaire – 53
7. Wladimir Klitschko – 33
8. Timothy Bradley – 19 (tie)
8. Pongsaklek Wonjongkam – 19 (tie)
10. Lucien Bute – 11

2010 POLL
1. Manny Pacquiao – 150
2. Floyd Mayweather Jr. – 117
3. Juan Manuel Marquez – 76
4. Sergio Martinez – 68
5. Andre Ward – 48
6. Nonito Donaire – 41
7. Tim Bradley – 27
8. Bernard Hopkins – 24
9. Juan Manuel Lopez – 21
10. Wladimir Klitschko – 20

2009 POLL
1. Manny Pacquiao – 144
2. Floyd Mayweather Jr. – 126
3. Shane Mosley – 79
4. Bernard Hopkins – 61
5. Chad Dawson – 48
6. Paul Williams – 42
7. Juan Manuel Marquez – 40
8. Nonito Donaire – 22
9. Ivan Calderon – 15
10. Arthur Abraham – 14

2008 POLL
1. Manny Pacquiao – 150
2. Joe Calzaghe –101
3. Juan Manuel Marquez – 99
4. Bernard Hopkins – 73
5. Antonio Margarito – 52
6. Israel Vasquez – 50
7. Rafael Marquez – 31
8. Miguel Cotto – 28
9. Ricky Hatton – 18 (tie)
9. Paul Williams – 18 (tie)

2007 POLL
1. Floyd Mayweather Jr. – 150
2. Manny Pacquiao – 103
3. Joe Calzaghe – 83
4. Bernard Hopkins – 63
5. Juan Manuel Marquez – 58
6. Miguel Cotto – 51
7. Israel Vasquez – 30
8. Kelly Pavlik – 21
9. Winky Wright – 15
10 Juan Diaz – 13 (tie)
10. Oscar De La Hoya – 13 (tie)

2006 POLL
1. Floyd Mayweather Jr. – 141
2. Manny Pacquiao – 129
3. Winky Wright – 84
4. Jermaine Taylor – 61
5. Joe Calzaghe – 49
6. Rafael Marquez – 28
7. Ricky Hatton – 23
8. Shane Mosley – 20
9. Jose Luis Castillo – 19
10. Bernard Hopkins – 16

2005 POLL
1. Floyd Mayweather Jr. –144
2. Winky Wright –113
3. Marco Antonio Barrera –70
4. Juan Manuel Marquez – 43
5. Rafael Marquez – 39
6. Ricky Hatton – 38
7. Jose Luis Castillo – 36
8. Jermain Taylor – 34
9. Zab Judah – 31
10. Antonio Tarver – 30

2004 POLL
1. Bernard Hopkins – 150
2. Floyd Mayweather Jr. – 111
3. Kostya Tszyu – 88
4. Winky Wright – 70
5. Marco Antonio Barrera – 52
6. Manny Pacquiao – 38
7. Erik Morales – 26
8. Juan Manuel Marquez – 25
9. Felix Trinidad – 22
10. Diego Corrales – 11 (tie)
10. Rafael Marquez –11 (tie)

2003 POLL
1. Roy Jones – 142
2. Bernard Hopkins – 114
3. Floyd Mayweather Jr. – 97
4. Shane Mosley – 53
5. Kostya Tszyu – 48
6. Oscar De La Hoya – 45
7. Manny Pacquiao – 38
8. James Toney – 35
9. Erik Moraels – 31
10. Lennox Lewis – 22

2002 POLL
1. Roy Jones – 135
2. Oscar De La Hoya – 89
3. Marco Antonio Barrera – 78 (tie)
3. Vernon Forrest – 78 (tie)
3. Bernard Hopkins – 78 (tie)
6. Floyd Mayweather Jr. – 45
7. Lennox Lewis – 43
8. Kostya Tszyu – 42
9. Erik Morales – 25
10. Shane Mosley – 13

2001 POLL
1. Shane Mosley – 132
2. Roy Jones – 108
3. Bernard Hopkins – 98
4. Floyd Mayweather Jr. – 77
5. Marco Antonio Barrera – 44
6. Oscar De La Hoya – 40
7. Felix Trinidad – 39
8. Kostya Tszyu – 34
9. Lennox Lewis – 23
10. Ricardo Lopez – 22

2000 POLL
1. Felix Trinidad – 126
2. Shane Mosley – 123
3. Roy Jones – 109
4. Oscar De La Hoya – 43
5. Floyd Mayweather Jr. – 39
6. Naseem Hamed – 37
7. Ricardo Lopez – 35
8. Diego Corrales – 33
9. Bernard Hopkins – 32
10. Lennox Lewis – 31

1999 POLL
1. Roy Jones – 150
2. Oscar De La Hoya – 85
3. Floyd Mayweather Jr. – 78
4. Shane Mosley – 68 (tie)
4. Felix Trinidad – 68 (tie)
6. Mark Johnson – 47 (tie)
6. Ricardo Lopez – 47 (tie)
8. Erik Morales – 21
9. Bernard Hopkins – 16
10. Fernando Vargas – 15

1998 POLL
1. Roy Jones – 141
2. Oscar De La Hoya – 123
3. Felix Trinidad – 67
4. Shane Mosley – 65
5. Evander Holyfield – 55
6. Mark Johnson – 45
7. Naseem Hamed – 33
8. Ricardo Lopez – 23
9. Floyd Mayweather Jr. – 19
10. Pernell Whitaker – 14

1997 POLL
1. Oscar De La Hoya – 123
2. Roy Jones – 117
3. Ricardo Lopez – 83
4. Evander Holyfield – 80
5. Felix Trinidad – 65
6. Pernell Whitaker – 37
7. Naseem Hamed – 28
8. Mark Johnson – 22 (tie)
8. Junior Jones – 22 (tie)
10. Johnny Tapia – 18

1996 POLL
1. Roy Jones – 123
2. Oscar De La Hoya – 107

3. Pernell Whitaker – 92
4. Evander Holyfield – 64
5. Felix Trinidad – 59
6. Ricardo Lopez – 56
7. Terry Norris – 28
8. Ike Quartey – 21
9. Azumah Nelson – 12
10. Yuri Arbachakov – 11

1995 POLL
1. Roy Jones – 138
2. Pernell Whitaker – 126
3. Oscar De La Hoya – 74
4. Felix Trinidad – 59
5. Marco Antonio Barrera – 48
6. Riddick Bowe – 44
7. Ricardo Lopez – 37
8. Julio Cesar Chavez – 18
9. Ike Quartey – 16
10. Naseem Hamed – 12

1994 POLL
1. Pernell Whitaker – 130
2. Roy Jones – 129
3. Frankie Randall – 53
4. Ricardo Lopez – 45
5. Orando Canizales – 39
6. Chiquita Gonzalez – 38
7. James Toney – 36
8. Gerald McClellan – 33
9. Felix Trinidad –29
10. Kevin Kelley – 28

1993 POLL
1. Pernell Whitaker – 147
2. Julio Cesar Chavez – 86
3. Terry Norris – 84
4. James Toney – 76
5. Michael Carbajal – 39
6. Evander Holyfield – 36
7. Buddy McGirt – 28
8. Roy Jones – 23
9. Orlando Canizales – 22
10. Ricardo Lopez – 21

1992 POLL
1. Julio Cesar Chavez – 136
2. Terry Norris – 91
3. Pernell Whitaker – 85
4. Buddy McGirt – 60
5. Riddick Bowe – 45
6. Orlando Canizales – 36
7. Azumah Nelson –34
8. Lennox Lewis – 24
9. Julian Jackson – 18
10. Roy Jones – 15 (tie)
10. Mike McCallum – 15 (tie)

1991 POLL
1. Julio Cesar Chavez – 138
2. Pernell Whitaker – 100
3. Evander Holyfield – 78
4. Mike Tyson – 55
5. Meldrick Taylor – 48
6. Mike McCallum – 38
7. Thomas Hearns – 34
8. Khaosai Galaxy – 25
9. Terry Norris – 22
10. Simon Brown – 21

1990 POLL
1. Julio Cesar Chavez – 123
2. Pernell Whitaker – 104
3. Mike Tyson – 71
4. Meldrick Taylor – 57
5. Buster Douglas – 51
6. Simon Brown – 27
7. Antonio Esparragoza – 25
8. Michael Nunn – 23
9. Evander Holyfield – 21
10. Humberto Gonzalez – 14

1989 POLL
1. Mike Tyson – 147
2. Julio Cesar Chavez – 91
3. Meldrick Taylor – 61
4. Michael Nunn – 60
5. Evander Holyfield – 56
6. Pernell Whitaker – 46
7. Ray Leonard – 28
8. Jeff Fenech – 27
9. Azumah Nelson – 18
10. Marion Starling – 16

1988 POLL
1. Mike Tyson – 144
2. Julio Cesar Chavez – 118
3. Evander Holyfield – 66
4. Ray Leonard – 55
5. Jeff Fenech – 44
6. Michael Nunn – 33
7. Azumah Nelson – 32
8. Jung Koo Chang – 23
9. Buddy McGirt – 21
10. Sumbu Kalambay – 18

NO POLL IN 1987

1986 POLL
1. Marvin Hagler – 138
2. Mike Tyson – 92
3. Donald Curry – 59
4. Thomas Hearns – 52
5. Edwin Rosario – 47
6. Azumah Nelson – 45 (tie)
6. Michael Spinks –45 (tie)
8. Evander Holyfield – 32
9. Julio Cesar Chavez – 26
10. Hector Camacho – 22

1985 POLL
1. Marvin Hagler – 150
2. Hector Camacho – 86
3. Michael Spinks –85
4. Donald Curry – 78
5. Thomas Hearns – 42
6. Barry McGuigan – 32
7. Milton McCrory – 25
8. Julio Cesar Chavez – 22 (tie)
8. Pinklon Thomas – 22 (tie)
10. Larry Holmes – 21

1984 POLL
1. Marvin Hagler – 112
2. Aaron Pryor – 77
3. Larry Holmes –72
4. Eusebio Pedroza – 66
5. Hector Camacho – 50
6. Jeff Chandler – 47 (tie)
6. Ray Leonard – 47 (tie)
8. Michael Spinks – 45
9. Thomas Hearns – 34
10. Donald Curry – 26

1983 POLL
11. Marvin Hagler – 147
12. Aaron Pryor – 93
13. Larry Holmes – 91
14. Michael Spinks –66
15. Jeff Chandler – 57
16. Thomas Hearns – 45
17. Alexis Arguello – 29
18. Wilfredo Gomez – 28
19. Hector Camacho – 24
20. Eusebio Pedroza – 12

1982 POLL
1. Ray Hagler – 147
2. Alexis Arguello – 97
3. Marvin Hagler – 76
4. Salvador Sanchez – 72
5. Wilfred Benitez – 68
6. Larry Holmes – 61
7. Jeff Chandler – 25
8. Eusebio Pedroza – 18
9. Aaron Pryor – 17
10. Thomas Hearns – 14 (tie)
10. Dwight Muhammad Qawi – 14 (tie)

1981 POLL
1. Thomas Hearns – 116
2. Ray Leonard – 108
3. Marvin Hagler –76
4. Larry Holmes – 75
5. Alexis Arguello – 62
6. Wilfredo Gomez – 58
7. Eddie Mustafa Muhammad –28
8. Matthew Saad Muhammad – 24
9. Wilfred Benitez –18
10. Roberto Duran – 13 (tie)
10. Aaron Pryor – 13 (tie)

1980 POLL
1. Roberto Duran –96
2. Ray Leonard – 93
3. Wilfredo Gomez – 88
4. Danny Lopez – 65
5. Pipino Cuevas –54
6. Alexis Arguello – 40
7. Larry Holmes – 32
8. Wilfred Benitez – 26
9. Vito Antuofermo – 25 (tie)
9. Matthew Saad Muhammad – 25 (tie)

HIGHLY UNOFFICIAL AWARDS

By: Don L. Stradley

INSPIRATIONAL FIGHTER OF THE YEAR
PAUL WILLIAMS

FUTURE CHAMPION TROPHY
GARY RUSSELL JR.

MOST EXCITING DIVISION
MIDDLEWEIGHT

MOST BORING DIVISION
JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHT

DIVISION WITH MOST POTENTIAL
JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHT

DIVISION WITH LEAST POTENTIAL
STRAWWEIGHT

FEMALE FIGHTER OF THE YEAR
CECILIA BRAEKHUS

MOST IMPROVED
ROY JONES JR., FOR HIS WORK AS AN HBO COMMENTATOR.

THE GENE TUNNEY AWARD FOR WEARING YOUR TITLE BELT WITH DIGNITY
VITALI KLITSCHKO

BILLY GRAHAM-JOEY GIARDELLO HIGHWAY ROBBERY AWARD
TIMOTHY BRADLEY-MANNY PACQUIAO

MUHAMMAD ALI "HOW TO LOSE WITH CLASS" AWARD
MANNY PACQUIAO (TWICE IN ONE YEAR)

JAKE LAMOTTA CAST IRON CHIN ANVIL
BRANDON RIOS

PLEASANT SURPRISE OF THE YEAR
PAULIE MALIGNAGGI'S POISE BEHIND THE MICROPHONE ON SHOWTIME

BOBBY CZYZ DISAPPEARING ANNOUNCER AWARD
ANTONIO TARVER

MISMATCH OF THE YEAR
ALEXANDER POVETKIN-HASIM RAHMAN

ARCHIE MOORE OLD MAN RIVER ROCKING CHAIR
BERNARD HOPKINS

CROSSROADS FIGHT OF THE YEAR
MARQUEZ-PACQUIAO IV

THE JACK THE RIPPER AWARD FOR UGLIEST GASH
GEORGE GROVES, COURTESY OF FRANCISCO SIERRA

THE MUHAMMAD ALI "TIME TO RETIRE" PENSION CHECK
GLEN JOHNSON

FRANK SINATRA "FLYING HIGH IN APRIL, SHOT DOWN IN MAY" AWARD
ANTONIO DEMARCO

THE UNFORTUNATE WASTE OF A NICKNAME AWARD
RANDALL "KNOCKOUT KING" BAILEY, WHO SHOT BLANKS AGAINST DEVON ALEXANDER

THE RING'S "CAN'T BUY A WIN" LUCKY HORSE SHOE
FREDDIE ROACH

JOE LOUIS "I DON'T KNOW WHEN TO QUIT" AWARD
ERIK MORALES

MOST FUN NAME TO PRONOUNCE
SHINSUKE YAMANAKA

THE FIGHTER WE'RE GLAD CAME TO AMERICA
GENNADY GOLOVKIN

ROBERTO DURAN "OUT ON MY FACE, TASTING CANVAS" LOBSTER BIB
MANNY PACQUIAO

JAMES KIRKLAND "CAN'T STAY ON MY FEET" AWARD
SETH MITCHELL

RIDDICK BOWE "OH, MY ACHING BALLS!" AWARD
HUMBERTO SOTO, THANKS TO JOSE LOPEZ

THE FIGHT YOU WON'T ADMIT YOU WANT TO SEE
JAMES TONEY-ANTONIO TARVER

JOHN RUIZ "HOW LITTLE WE MISS YOU" AWARD
JOE CALZAGHE

JERSEY JOE WALCOTT "I WILL EVENTUALLY WIN THE BIG ONE" AWARD
JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ

GUS JOHNSON AWARD FOR WORST IMPRESSION OF A BOXING COMMENTATOR
MAURO RANALLO

RICARDO MAYORGA "BEATING ME LOOKS GOOD ON YOUR RECORD" AWARD
ANDRE BERTO, JORGE ARCE

WORST BOXING JUDGE OF THE YEAR GOLDEN BLINDFOLD
RUBEN GARCIA, FOR HIS ATROCIOUS SCORE OF THE DONAIRE-VAZQUEZ BOUT

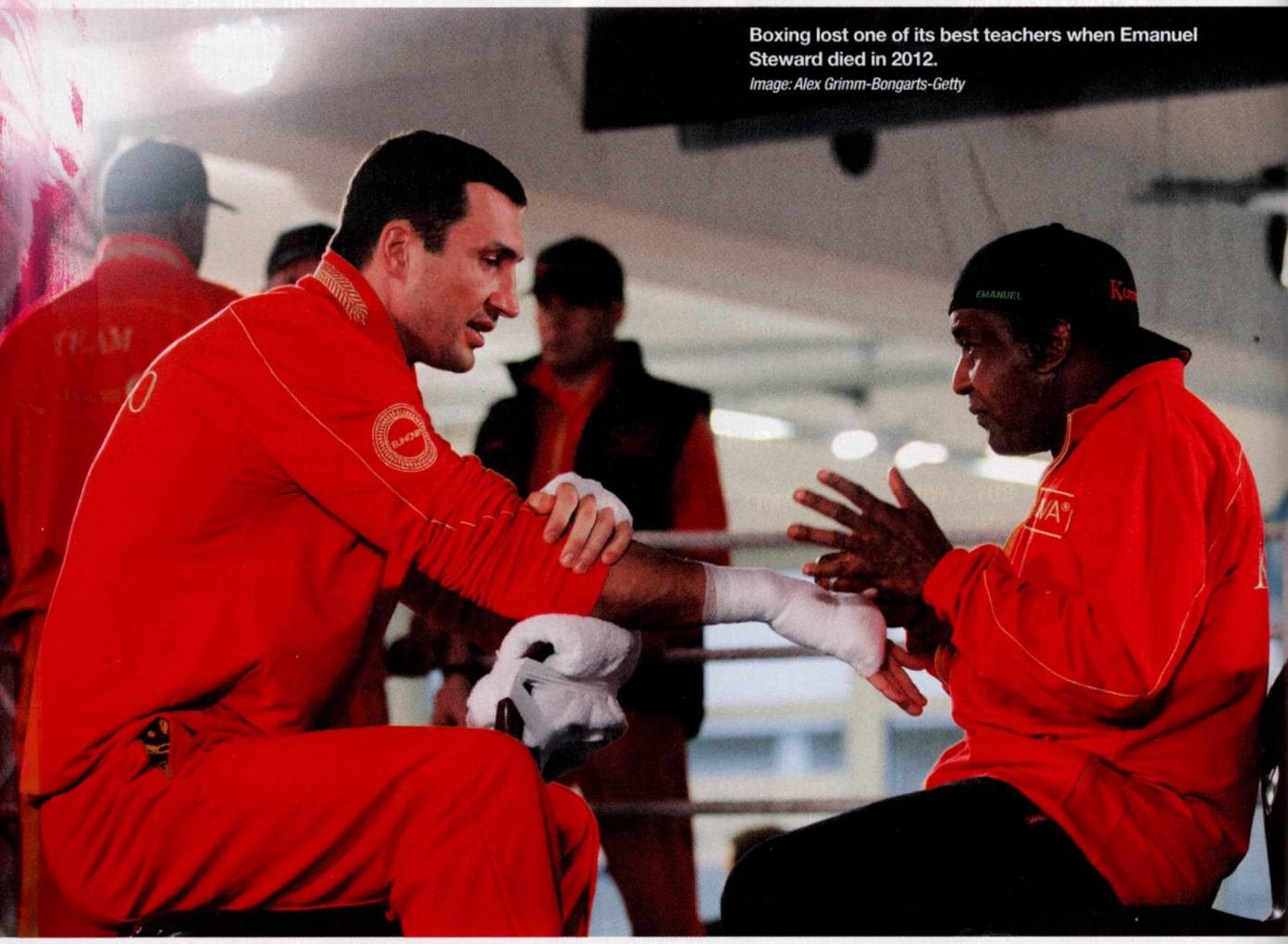
THE CHARLIE SHEEN "YOU WERE FUN FOR A WHILE NOW SHUT UP" AWARD
DERECK CHISORA

THOMAS HEARNS "IF I HAD A CHIN, I'D BE UNDEFEATED" AWARD
AMIR KHAN

EVANDER HOLYFIELD "NEVER IN A DULL FIGHT" AWARD
MIGUEL COTTO

THE FIGHTER WE'D MOST LIKE TO SEE COME TO AMERICA
KOKI KAMEDA

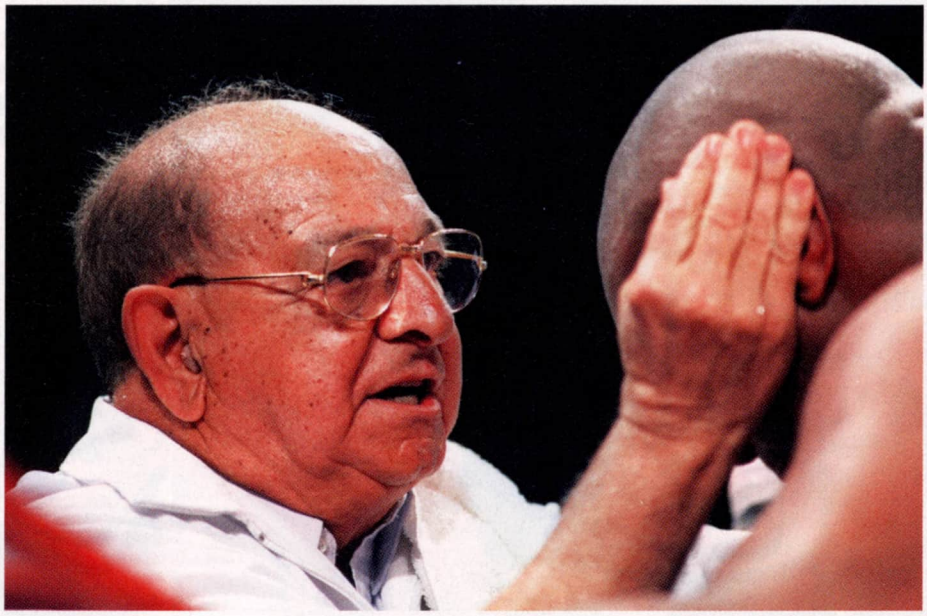
BRONZE JACKASS FOR POOR SPORTSMANSHIP
PACQUIAO'S ADVISER MICHAEL KONCZ AND FRIEND RESITUTO "BUBOY" FERNANDEZ WILL SHARE THIS ONE. ATTACKING PHOTOGRAPHER AL BELLO, WHO WAS MERELY TAKING PHOTOS OF A DOWNED PACQUIAO, IS AS BAD AS IT GETS. MAYBE SEEING THEIR MEAL TICKET ON THE CANVAS WAS TOO MUCH TO BEAR.



Boxing lost one of its best teachers when Emanuel Steward died in 2012.
Image: Alex Grimm-Bongarts-Getty

A LOST ART?

SOME BELIEVE THE PASSING OF LEGENDARY TRAINERS HAS LEFT A DEARTH OF QUALITY TEACHERS IN BOXING



Angelo Dundee (giving George Foreman a pep talk) was one of the sport's great motivators.
Image: Mike Powell-Getty

By: **Bernard Fernandez**

Terrific boxing trainers, like baseball managers and NFL analysts on network television, need not be highly accomplished in their own sports careers, provided they even had one. Nor does having had success in the ring necessarily translate into success in the corner. Just as Johnny Unitas and Joe Montana bombed as TV talkers, and Ted Williams failed to make nearly as much of a mark as a dugout strategist as he did in the batter's box, the list of boxers who fell short as trainers is just as full of legendary names.

The late, great Joe Frazier, for instance, could knock down walls with his wrecking-ball left hook, but as a cornerman it was said that he tried to make each of his pupils fight in the same constantly-attacking, take-no-prisoners manner that worked so well for him. Had he entrusted his professional fortunes to Smokin' Joe, even a cutie like Pernell Whitaker might have tried to win toe-to-toe slugfests instead of sticking and moving. The guess here is that such a transformation would not have worked to Sweet Pea's advantage.

So let us celebrate the masters of motivation, the gym teachers who can take unformed lumps of clay and mold them into pugilistic works of art. They are, if the recent past is any indication, literally a dying breed.

The Oct. 25 death of Hall of Fame trainer Emanuel Steward, who was 68 when he succumbed to colon cancer and complications from surgery for diverticulitis, in and of itself is reason for fight fans to mourn. But in a larger context it is just another entry on a lengthening list of sad farewells to trainers who helped their fighters scale heights they otherwise might not have attained. Since the spring of 2011, a sport that depends so much on the knowledge of wise men like Steward has lost other masters such as Angelo Dundee, Goody Petronelli, Bill "Pops" Miller, Gil Clancy, Bouie Fisher and George Benton. Each passing has subtracted from the sweet science's collective IQ, just as a college faculty would suffer from a rash of deaths among its best and longest-tenured professors.

Teddy Atlas, better known now for his analyst work on ESPN2's Friday Night Fights but a noted trainer in his own right when he chooses to put down the microphone, has frequently bemoaned the overall tamping down of teaching skills in the sport as, one by one, the savviest veterans lose their bouts with the Grim Reaper. It takes more than someone draping a towel over his shoulder for him to be considered a real trainer, Atlas notes.

And those trainers boxing has already lost could be joined by other skilled practitioners whose corner lives figure to have more past than future. Freddie Roach, the only five-

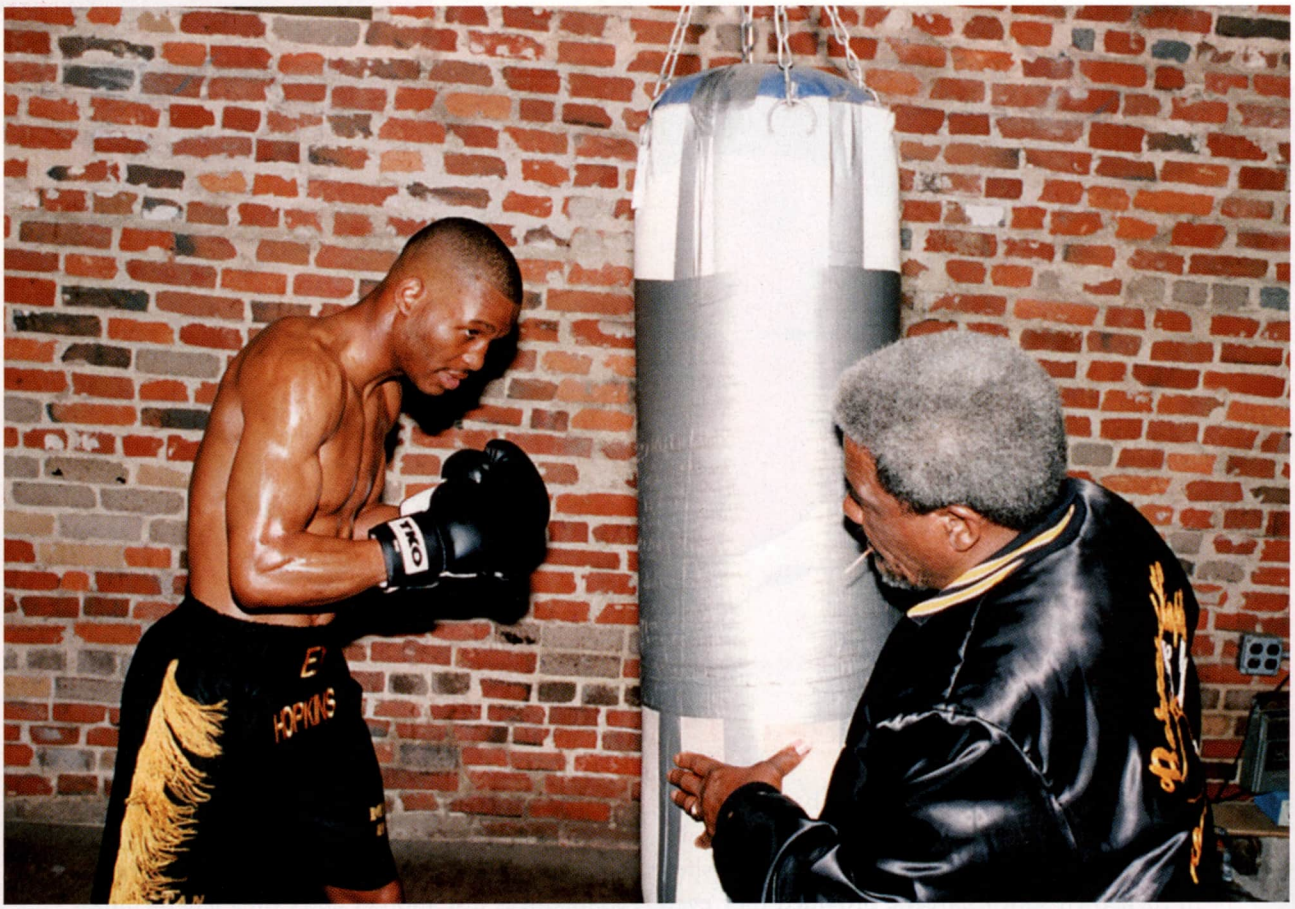


Image: THE RING

The guy on the right — trainer Bouie Fisher — is one reason Bernard Hopkins is a great boxer.

time selection as Trainer of the Year by the Boxing Writers Association of America, is increasingly prone to the effects of Parkinson's, which Amir Khan, rightly or wrongly, claimed contributed to his decision to replace Roach. Nacho Beristain is 73 and has had health issues of his own. And, don't forget, Lou Duva is 90 and no longer a regular corner presence.

But the exodus of outstanding teachers, despite what seemingly is a state of crisis over the past 18 months, has been ongoing a lot longer than that. Remember the grief the boxing community felt when we said goodbye to Bill Slayton in 2003, Eddie Futch in 2001, Ray Arcel in 1994 and Yank Durham in 1973? They not only provided tactical expertise to their star students but inspired them to run through hell wearing gasoline overcoats, if that's what it took to achieve greatness.

"I was a young guy when I started, and it was like being enrolled in a university, a university of boxing," Fisher, who took Bernard Hopkins to the middleweight championship and was 83 when he died on June 30, 2011, said of the listen-and-learn sessions with his sage predecessors in Philadelphia. "The gym was my classroom. I can't tell you how lucky I was to spend time around Quenzell McCall, Milt Bailey, Joe Gramby, (Clarence) `Skinny' Davis, Dick Kain. Oh, man. It went on and on.

"You hear enough stories, something is going to stick. There were so many great trainers to come out of Philadelphia. And even the ones who weren't great were pretty good."

But longtime Philly promoter J Russell Peltz said the notion that the cagiest corner guys routinely tutored their eventual successors is at least part myth. "A lot of the old trainers were secretive," Peltz said. "They never really passed on their tricks of the trade. A lot of the fighters who were trained by the old guys, when they got to retirement age, didn't become trainers themselves."

If Peltz is correct, the recent spate of deaths among standout trainers is even more critical because they were, for the most part, nice guys inclined to pass along what they had learned along the way. Take Steward, for

instance. The branches of his tree of knowledge have borne several highly regarded trainers in their own right, impressionable minds that soaked up Manny's instruction and put what they learned into practice. Heavyweight contender Johnathon Banks, at 30, still has a lot of tread on his own boxing tires, with a 29-1-1 record, including 19 victories inside the distance, the most recent being a second-round stoppage of the favored and previously unbeaten Seth Mitchell on Nov. 17 in Atlantic City, N.J. That victory, incidentally, came one week after he served as chief second for heavyweight champion Wladimir Klitschko's unanimous decision over Mariusz Wach in Hamburg, Germany.

"I knew from the beginning it was going to be Johnathon Banks," Klitschko said of his decision to replace the deceased Steward, as much as that was humanly possible, with a trusted protégé of Manny's. "He is a man who has learned a lot from Emanuel and whom I met on the same day I first met Emanuel nine years ago."

Working backward, let us salute and remember those titans of the training arts who took their leave over the past 18 months and now toil in the celestial corners.

Image: Thomas Langer-Bongarts-Getty

Johnathon Banks, a protégé of Emanuel Steward, took over the training of Wladimir Klitschko when Steward fell ill.

EMANUEL STEWARD

Detroit's famed Kronk Gym, where Steward developed Thomas Hearns, Hilmer Kenty, Milton McCrory, Jimmy Paul and Michael Moorer into champions, is shuttered and empty now, a victim of municipal budget cuts in Manny's beloved but cash-strapped home city. Not only are the fighters who proudly wore Kronk's red and gold colors gone from that cramped sweat shop, but so are all visible reminders that one of boxing's premier teachers once worked there.

"There are people in the gym – scavengers – who would try to take everything," Steward family spokesperson Diane Steward-Jones said of the decision to remove all boxing artifacts from the Kronk to "safeguard the legacy" of her brother. "People are not going to rape and pillage that place. ... Emanuel was counting on me to protect his stuff, and I'm going to do that."

But it wasn't only inanimate objects that Steward, a 1963 National Golden Gloves bantamweight champion who posted a 94-3 record as an amateur, touched and made better. It was the people he saw as multi-dimensional human beings, not just as gloved automatons in the ring.

"I would spend hours just talking with (his fighters), not just about boxing, but about everything," Steward said of his approach to his craft, and to life. "I needed to know what their past was like. What got them excited. What they were afraid of.

"I give everybody their own individuality. You never see all my

Image: Tony Duffy-Getty

Eddie Futch (here working with Riddick Bowe) trained Freddie Roach and taught him most of what he knows.

fighters fight the same way. I find the best punches and movements that are the most natural for the coordination of their body types."

Longtime HBO boxing commentator Larry Merchant, a friend and colleague of Steward's, said the Manny way was always heartfelt and genuine. "I remember one time, when he was in Austria training Klitschko, he flew back to St. Louis for two days just to be in the corner of one of his fighters in a preliminary bout," Merchant recalled. "He cared about those prelim kittens every bit as much as he did for his many champions."

ANGELO DUNDEE

If Steward wasn't the nicest and most beloved man in boxing, Angelo certainly was. Maybe they merited co-No. 1 status. One would be hard-pressed to find anyone who had something bad to say about either pied piper of a sport always in need of goodwill ambassadors.

Dundee, who was 90 when he passed away on Feb. 1, 2012, had a who's who stable of fighters that included Muhammad Ali and Sugar Ray Leonard, as well as names like Carmen Basilio, Ralph Dupas, Willie Pastrano, George Foreman, Jose Napoles, Jimmy Ellis and Luis Rodriguez. He learned his trade at Stillman's Gym in New York from such renowned mentors as Arcel, Charlie Goldman and Chickie Ferrera before eventually relocating to Miami Beach, where he was lead trainer at the historic Fifth Street Gym.

Perhaps more than anything, Dundee was known for his ability to work miracles during the one-minute rest period between rounds. "The greatest motivator of all time," promoter Bob Arum once said of Angelo, an assessment seconded by the "Fight Doctor," Ferdie Pacheco. "In that one minute, Angelo is Godzilla and Superman rolled into one," Pacheco gushed.

GOODY PETRONELLI

Goody, whose actual first name was Guerino, was 88 when he died of natural causes on Jan. 29, 2012, in Brockton, Mass. Along with his older brother, Pat, he co-managed and trained middleweight champion Marvelous Marvin Hagler, although the division of duties called for Goody to do most of the strategizing while Pat – who was 89 when he died five months before Goody – handled Hagler's business affairs.

A close friend of former heavyweight champion Rocky Marciano, Goody also tutored Hagler's half-brother, middleweight contender Robbie Sims, as well as Steve Collins, Drake Thadzi and Kevin McBride, the last man to defeat Mike Tyson.

BILL "POPS" MILLER

Miller, an amateur champion who was a student of the legendary Whitey Bimstein, originally was from Cincinnati but moved on to Detroit. That's where he was best known for his hand in turning James Toney into a three-division world champion. But Miller, who was 87 when he died of bladder cancer in July 2012, was no one-trick pony. He also worked with such notables as Bronco McKart, Lindell Holmes, Rickey Womack and Davey Moore.

"He was a bebop cat and the last of his era as a boxing trainer," Steward said of the gentlemanly Miller, a jazz buff. "He'd talk to you, pass on those old-school skills."

GEORGE BENTON

Known as "The Professor" for his teaching acumen, Benton, who was 78 when he died of pneumonia on Sept. 19, 2011, was inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in the Non-participant category in 2001. He was a superb trainer, too, with a client list that included Evander Holyfield, Pernell Whitaker, Meldrick Taylor, Mike McCallum, Mark Breland, Johnny Bumphus and Rocky Lockridge. All benefited from the Prof's instruction, especially when it came to sharpening their defensive skills.

Benton also was a truly gifted middleweight, posting a 62-13-1 professional record with 37 wins inside the distance and earning a No. 1 ranking at one time, although he never got a shot at a world title.

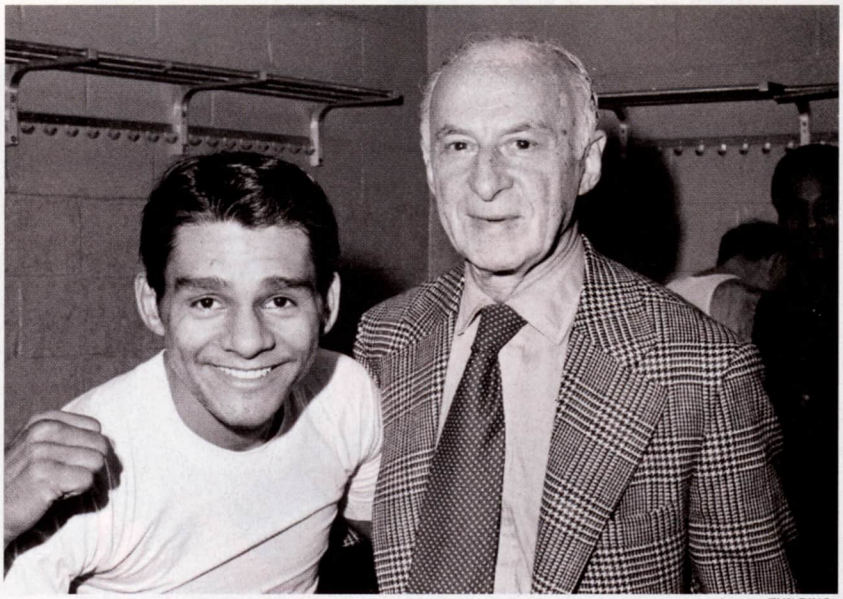


Image: THE RING

Ray Arcel (right, pictured with a young Roberto Duran) was a top trainer for more than a half century.

BOUIE FISHER

Bernard Hopkins was an ex-con with a 0-1 record when he teamed up with Fisher in 1989. They were together from then until 2002, and again from 2003-2005. The high point of their affiliation came on Sept. 29, 2001, when B-Hop knocked out Felix Trinidad in Madison Square Garden to fully unify the middleweight championship. Hopkins was voted Fighter of the Year by the BWAA largely off that performance, with Fisher named Trainer of the Year.

Although they parted ways in a dispute over financial matters, Hopkins was unstinting in his praise of Fisher, who was 83 when he died on June 30, 2011, after a 21-month battle with rectal cancer.

"Bouie is it," Hopkins said toward the end of their long run together. "He's the last link to that legacy (of great Philadelphia trainers). Who else is there? Name five others who have his credentials. Name two. Name one, even. You can't do it. It wasn't like that in the past. But the pool is drying up."

GIL CLANCY

Clancy, who was 88 when he died on March 31, 2011, was best known for his long association with welterweight and middleweight champion Emile Griffith, and as a longtime boxing analyst for CBS, HBO and the Madison Square Garden Network. He also worked with, among others, George Foreman, Gerry Cooney, Oscar De La Hoya, Ken Norton, Jerry Quarry, Rodrigo Valdez and Ralph "Tiger" Jones.

A demanding taskmaster in the gym, Clancy always prodded his fighters to give him their best, and more often than not that's what he got.

"I worked Emile Griffith's corner for over 120 rounds, and after every one I'd say something to him," Clancy once said. "He asked me, 'Don't I ever do anything right?' I said, 'You do almost everything right. But I'm looking for the perfect round.'" ■

Image: Naoki Fukuda

The WBC should be applauded for its auction, which is part of the controversial organization's efforts to help retired boxers in need.

A STAR-STUDDED WBC AUCTION WAS INTENDED TO BE THE FIRST STEP TOWARD A PENSION FOR FIGHTERS

LIFE AFTER BOXING

By: **Norm Frauenheim**

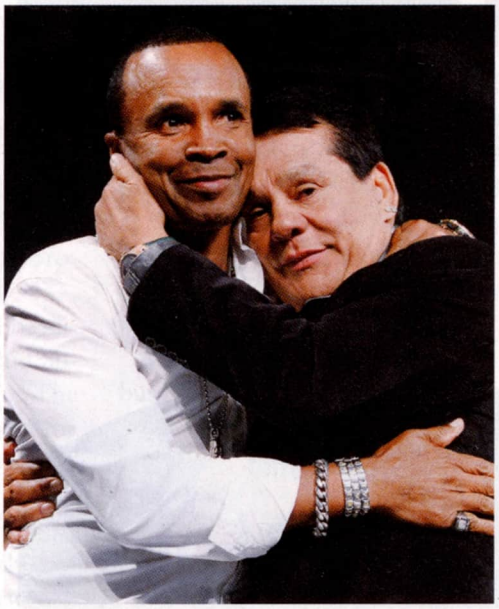
Unlike the rest of America, retired boxers don't have to argue about entitlements. They're entitled only to what all those punches can do. Scars, trouble breathing through a nose fractured more often than an old windshield and slurred speech are part of their retirement plan. A pension isn't there.

Never really has been.

But an attempt at one is on the World Boxing Council's drawing board. Yes, that WBC, the acronym so often condemned for its sanctioning fees, silver belts, interim championships, vacant titles, rankings and all of the rest. The first step was an auction in September at Las Vegas' Bellagio.

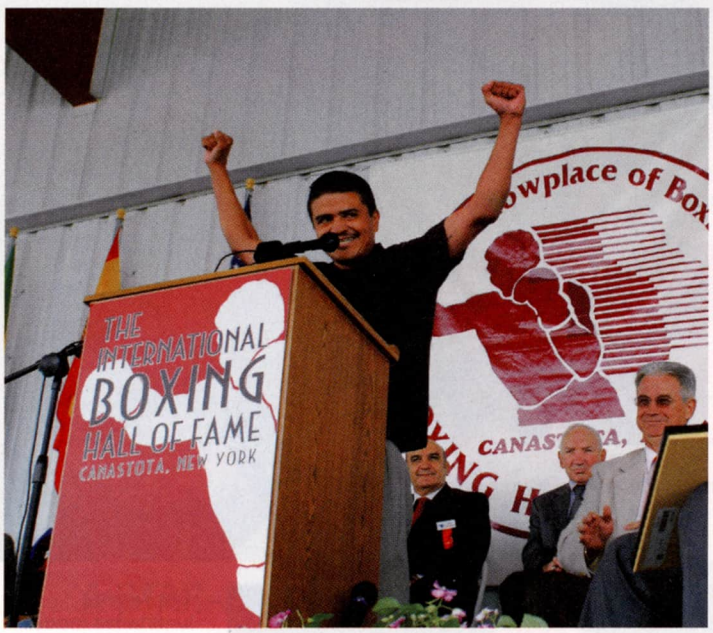
Twelve Hublot-made watches, complete with lime-green bands that made them look like the WBC belt, were signed by Sugar Ray Leonard, George Foreman, Larry Holmes, Julio Cesar Chavez, Roberto Duran, Oscar De La Hoya and Tommy Hearns, among others. The Leonard watch went for the most, $140,000. In all, $1 million was raised in what will presumably be seed money for a pension fund that will last beyond the headlines.

It's an idea that's been talked about almost as often as Floyd Mayweather Jr. vs. Manny Pacquiao. It's even been tried, but without lasting impact. The California State Athletic Commission attempted to fund one with a ticket surcharge. But few ever benefited. Amid



Top, boxing luminaries model the watches that were auctioned to raise money for a pension fund. Above, Jose Sulaiman is the president of the WBC. Left, old rivals (Ray Leonard and Roberto Duran) stick together later in life.

Images: Naoki Fukuda and Getty



Retired boxers (clockwise from top) Iran Barkley, Emile Griffith, Ken Norton and Michael Carbajal could use some assistance these days.

Images: Jeff Julian

the emerging crisis over California's overall budget, there were questions about who qualified and who ran it. Then, there was a plan offered by the International Boxing Federation (IBF). But again, there were questions about qualifications and regulations.

"I think they're all frauds," said Top Rank's Bob Arum, who throughout his half century in the business promoted legends who thrived in retirement and legends who didn't. "I mean, it is not a sport that lends itself to these plans because there are guys fighting one or two fights and guys fighting 40 fights. How do you do it?

"California did one, but had to give back money. The IBF has done one, but I don't know how it worked. I don't know anybody who ever got any money from it."

In effect, the retired boxer has to heed the warning he heard before every opening bell: Protect yourself at all times. Some do. Foreman, Holmes, De La Hoya and Leonard did. But many don't in a downward spiral that turns them into the broken-down cliché boxing can ill-afford in its neverending argument with abolitionists in the medical community and media. It's a public face that no business wants in its advertising. Ask the major newspaper in almost any city why it has abandoned boxing coverage, and many an editor will talk about the homeless Hall of Famer he just saw stumble in a drunken stupor from one corner saloon to the next.

Let somebody else decide whether that judgment is fair. The NFL, NBA and major-league baseball suffer from their own share of scandal, trouble and tragedy among retirees. In each case, however, an organization is in place. So, too, are retirement plans. Commissioners and owners negotiate with player unions. Only chaos unifies boxing.

It's a guessing game as to whether the WBC plan represents further chaos or a blueprint that can transform pie-in-the-sky thinking into something real. WBC executive director Mauricio Sulaiman said he hopes the ruling body will begin to disburse monthly payments in 2013 to fighters with proven needs. But who qualifies? To wit: Does the retired fighter have to be a former WBC champion? Or fought for a WBC title? Does qualification include the number of fights or rounds? California's proposed plan called for a minimum of 75 rounds.

"There are several filters to determine who will be eligible, as well as detailed causes for dismissal," said Sulaiman, the son of WBC President Jose Sulaiman. "The monthly aid is intended to provide monetary help for food and medicine. There are many candidates who are being evaluated to receive aid."

Ken Norton, who fought for the WBC's heavyweight title twice and beat Muhammad Ali once, is an early sign that the ruling body is serious about implementing its plan. Norton, who signed one of the Hublot watches, was not able to attend the auction. He suffered a stroke in August and then got an infection while in rehab. At the time of his stroke, reportedly minor, he was three months behind on his rent. The WBC helped him. If it hadn't, the ailing Norton, 69, might have been evicted.

The Mexico City-based sanctioning organization has always helped whenever possible, said Sulaiman, who added that limited funding has always been a problem.

"The WBC has been sending a monthly allowance for many years to several fighters from around the world – fighters who are in difficulty and need of a helping hand," he said. "Some of them are Wilfred Benitez, Emile Griffith, Chartchai Chionoi, Gerald McClellan, Jose Becerra, just to name a few."

According to Sulaiman, the pension fund will be run through the Nevada Community Foundation, which puts together and administers non-profit organizations. The Foundation will direct the fund-raising, navigate the tax questions and provide a buffer between the money and the WBC. That buffer is important, at least in terms of public perception. Fair or not, the WBC's history of controversy would lead to widespread suspicion if the money was directly raised and distributed by them. It would be naïve to say that some suspicion won't be there anyway. That's the nature of the game, which is to say the presumption is always "guilty."

If you are judged by the people around you, however, the WBC has found credibility in a committee of three men who have agreed to help the ruling body implement its plan. Sig Rogich, a former chairman of the Nevada State Athletic Commission and advisor to President George H.W. Bush, will work with former Nevada commissioner Dr. James Nave and Steve Crosson, a real estate and finance expert in Dallas.

"It's something we've talked about, even when I was with the Nevada Commission so many years ago," said Rogich, a former U.S. ambassador to Iceland who worked for Ronald Reagan in his 1984 campaign for president and for Bush in the 1988 election, as well as at the White House. "We looked at it. We tried to start some semblance of something at one time by adding to the ticket price. It just didn't have the impetus that it needed to stay in place."

Arum's skepticism, which sums up what many in the business think of the WBC plan, doesn't surprise Rogich, who sat in the Nevada Commission's chair for eight of his 12 years on the regulatory board.

"No, I'm not (surprised)," Rogich said. "We've had skepticism for all the organizations, from the organizations and about the other organizations forever. So I'm not surprised at all. The state of Nevada, for example,

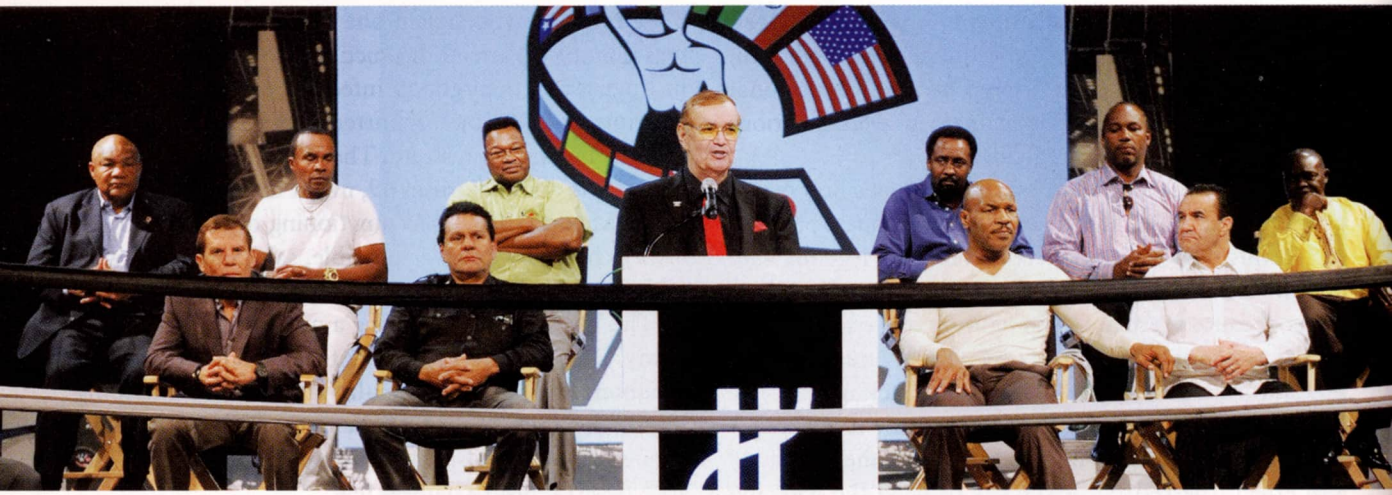


Image: Naoki Fukuda

The WBC was able to attract some of the biggest names in boxing to its auction.

has its moments with the WBA, WBC, the IBF and everybody else. That's true in New York and all the other boxing states – Florida, California. All of these organizations have had their moments with each other.

"But at the end of the day, no matter how you get there, if we can create some kind of revenue for a worthwhile cause, I'm all for it."

So, too, is Jacquie Richardson, executive director of the Retired Boxers Foundation. Richardson, who runs the foundation for founder and former middleweight Alex Ramos, has spent most of a lifetime counseling troubled ex-boxers, urging them to seek help. She guides them through the bureaucratic labyrinth of social services for the homeless and those with alcohol and/or drug problems. There's never been much in her budget.

"Most of what we ever have is $20,000 in the bank," she said.

But energy and commitment have been an inexhaustible resource, especially in the story of Rocky Lockridge, who won the WBA's junior lightweight title with a 1984 stoppage of Roger Mayweather. Lockridge wound up homeless and addicted on the streets of Camden, N.J. Richardson pointed him in the right direction, while also telling him that help would only be there if he stayed sober. The Lockridge story was beautifully portrayed in 2010 on A&E's Emmy Award-winning series, *Intervention*.

Lockridge has been sober for three years, Richardson said. But he suffered a stroke and has been in a convalescent home, re-learning how to swallow and speak. It's a sad story, made even sadder because it's not uncommon.

In New York, former middleweight Iran Barkley was homeless with no mattress and only the subway as a place to sleep. In Phoenix, Hall of Fame junior-flyweight Michael Carbajal, a former WBC and IBF champion, battles a drinking problem and struggles to pay his bills after his brother left him broke. Danny Carbajal, also his manager and trainer, was sentenced to 54 months in prison on charges he looted an estimated $2 million, including a pension fund, from Michael.

"These are the ones who rip my heart out," said Richardson, who argues that a small percentage of the richest gates should go into a retirement fund.

She hopes the WBC plan works, but she has some advice: Make sure that the money is deposited with somebody trusted and close to the retired fighter. Too many have blown a lot more on a single night after collecting a big purse following a bout. Richardson also asks that the fund's administrator makes sure that retired fighters know that a pension is even available. She recalls that news of the California pension was first advertised in *The Wall Street Journal*, the pages of which can't be found among all those old fight posters that cover the battered walls of any gym in any city.

"Put notices up in those gyms," she said. "They won't hear about it otherwise. But, yeah, absolutely, I'm hopeful that the WBC succeeds in this. I would really hope that the various state commissions and the ABC (Association of Boxing Commissions) get behind it."

Even greyhound racing dogs have a retirement plan, she said. In response to years of widespread abuse, the American Greyhound Council and National Greyhound Association created a placement service for dogs with nowhere to go after all those nights of chasing a mechanical rabbit.

"Come on now, don't you think we could do something for our retired professional boxers?" Richardson asks.

Maybe, the WBC has an answer. ■

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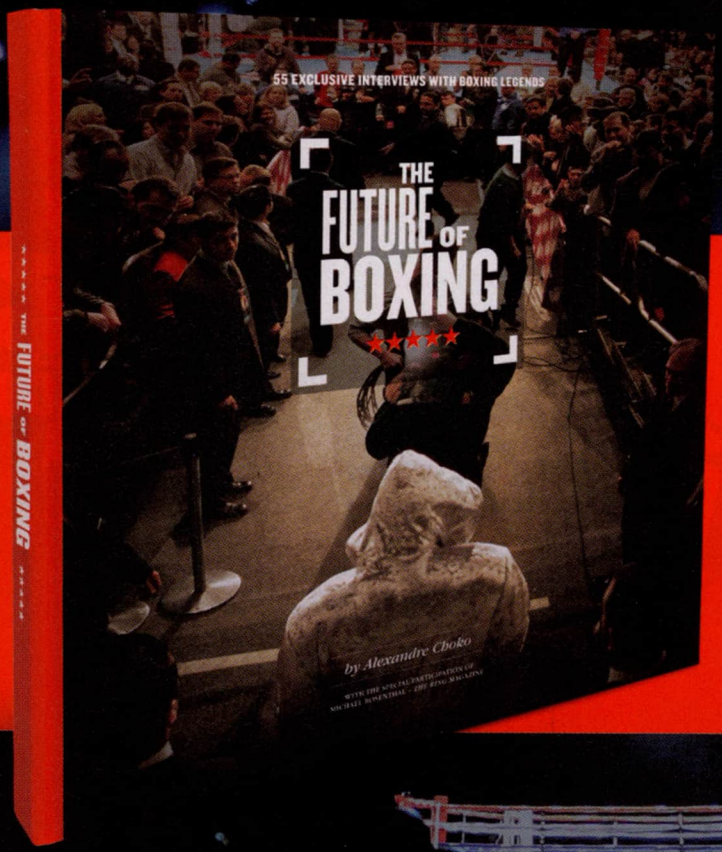

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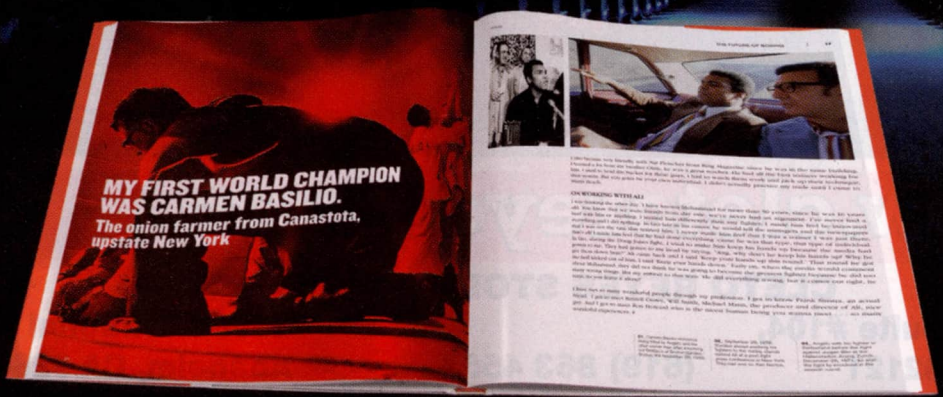

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THE PERFECT PUNCH

JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ ERASES THE FRUSTRATION OF THREE PREVIOUS FIGHTS BY KNOCKING MANNY PACQUIAO UNCONSCIOUS WITH A SINGLE HISTORIC BLOW

Juan Manuel Marquez made the strongest-possible statement in his stunning knockout of Manny Pacquiao.
Image: Eric Jamison-Associated Press

By: **Ron Borges**

For nearly 42 rounds Juan Manuel Marquez had been pounding on the edges of Manny Pacquiao's sometimes-lax defensive perimeter, waiting for his moment. When it finally arrived, he went nuclear.

Often in their three previous fights Marquez had launched shots warning of what would eventually happen on the night of Dec. 8, sending straight counter-right hands slamming into Pacquiao's face again and again. So many landed over the course of their eight-year trilogy that a lot of people in boxing believed Marquez had won at least two of those three encounters, if not all of them, despite a record book that read 0-2-1.

None of those previous blows landed like the final one, however, a howitzer to the face that sent Pacquiao crashing violently to the floor as if the statue of a great dictator had finally been toppled by the angry people he had for so long mistreated.

Marquez's ire and disgust at what he felt were judicial injustices of the past had welled up inside him following their third fight, a majority-decision loss 13 months ago that provided the clearest margin for debate. It was like a bubbling cauldron of hate that nearly led him to retire, a hurt so deep that when asked in the days before the fight whether he and Pacquiao might one day become friends in the way Arturo Gatti and Micky Ward had become blood brothers in the most literal of ways, Marquez looked at his questioner as if he'd lost his mind.

"We are professionals," Marquez said. "We respect each other as professional boxers but after what we've gone through the first three fights I doubt we can have that kind of relationship. Inside the ring is a respect that will always be there. Outside the ring, who knows?"

The counter right hand that toppled Pacquiao from the top of the boxing world and face-planted him into the canvas with only a second left in the sixth round may not have done anything to settle that issue, but when the unmoving Pacquiao was counted out by referee Kenny Bayless on the ring floor at the MGM Grand Garden Arena, there was a finality to it that was stunning. So stunning in fact that it left open to debate many things, not the least of them being what the future holds for Pacquiao, who turned 34 nine days after that stunning defeat.

Trainer Freddie Roach said he would have to watch Pacquiao in the gym before he could honestly advise him whether he should continue, and Pacquiao's wife, Jinkee, expressed her natural desire for him to retire. But it was left to 48-year-old fistic phenomenon Bernard Hopkins to caution of the lasting long-term effects of the kind of knockout Pacquiao had just suffered.

"That's the type of punch that takes more than one fight out of you," Hopkins told Showtime host Jim Rome a week after the stoppage. "It takes a couple of fights out of you.

"It's one of those types of knockouts that you can recover from in life, but I don't think you can recover fully in the sport. That was a devastating knockout that has a long-term effect. I know when you see a guy get knocked out and hit in that way, they are considered damaged goods and they live up to that title.

"I would advise him to grab his wife and kids and take a long vacation. Take a long year off. Regroup physically, mentally, spiritually and then you make the decision. Truthfully, it was such a devastating knockout that I don't think he will ever be the Pacquiao that he was."

"It's one of those types of knockouts that you can recover from in life, but I don't think you can recover fully in the sport. That was a devastating knockout that has a long-term effect. I know when you see a guy get knocked out and hit in that way, they are considered damaged goods and they live up to that title." — Bernard Hopkins

Time will tell, but the manner in which Marquez savaged him will not soon be forgotten by anyone who witnessed it. Pacquiao had begged the more scientifically inclined Marquez to finally engage in a toe-to-toe brawl after three fights in which he had remained content to counterpunch Pacquiao into confusion but not often enough in the opinion of some to have his hand raised.

Roach agreed, saying before the fight he doubted the 39-year-old Marquez could change his approach at this late stage of his career but admitted, "that kind of fight favors us." How wrong they both were.

During the same pre-fight conversation, Roach also spoke of the elephant in the room: Marquez's clearly bulked-up body and the fact it came along with the recent addition of disgraced former steroid dealer Angel

Images: Al Bello and Jeff Bottari-Getty

Above, Manny Pacquiao's pre-fight prayers were answered in that he emerged healthy after some harrowing moments. Below, some were suspicious in light of Juan Manuel Marquez's physique.

"Memo" Heredia as his strength and conditioning coach. Marquez vehemently denied taking performance-enhancing drugs while Heredia remained as far in the background as possible, but the storyline lingered like cigarette smoke over a baccarat table.

Marquez repeatedly urged the Nevada State Athletic Commission to "test me whenever you want," but despite past accusations from Floyd Mayweather Jr. about the source of Pacquiao's power and the questions swirling around Marquez's body and the decision to add Heredia to his team, neither fighter was tested before the bout.

"Marquez has put on a lot of muscle," Roach said. "He's gotten bigger and gained weight — it throws up a red flag. If (his body) is natural, I'll kiss his ass. Hopefully that means he wants to fight

harder and not be just a counterpuncher. Muscle doesn't help counterpunching."

Marquez weighed in at 143 pounds the day before the fight, four below Pacquiao's 147, and by fight time the ratio had only slightly changed: Pacquiao at 151, Marquez 148. But while muscle may not help counterpunchers, it surely didn't hurt the one Marquez threw in the waning moments of Round 6 as Pacquiao came forward trying to press an advantage that was not as big as he thought.

By then, Marquez had already dropped Pacquiao hard to the floor with a counter-right hand in the third round and been knocked off balance himself, leading to his glove touching the canvas for a knockdown in a fifth round that turned furiously in Pacquiao's favor after that.

By the end of that round the bridge of Marquez's nose had been split open and a river of red was running down his face. He seemed to be having trouble breathing as well, and when the sixth round opened, Pacquiao came out on the attack.

He got the better of several toe-to-toe exchanges, driving Marquez backward, but also was getting tagged too often himself, a fact of which he seemed oblivious to the point of recklessness. As the round was coming to an end, he won another exchange and then threw a stiff right jab, jumping forward without trying to first feint the counterpuncher into hesitation. It was the ultimate mistake against the ultimate professional.

"Counterpunching is the smart way to fight Manny Pacquiao," Roach had admitted three days earlier. "Marquez knows to lead with his right hand. Manny can't walk into the right hand."

In fact, the straight right is the most dangerous punch a southpaw must contend with, coming as it does from his unprotected side, and few fighters throw it more accurately than Marquez. He also may be the best counterpuncher of his time, a skillful surgeon amid a world of butchers, and a skillful counterpuncher is always someone to be wary of when things appear bleakest. This was a lesson Pacquiao learned long ago but in the heat of the moment forgot as he leapt in on Marquez, believing his long-time nemesis would continue to retreat toward the turnbuckle behind him.

Instead, Marquez did what counterpunchers do. As the muscles in Pacquiao's right shoulder began to ripple, whispering to someone like Marquez a warning of what was headed in his direction, the Mexican launched his response. Despite Roach's warnings, six weeks of preparation and Pacquiao's experience in the previous three fights, Marquez landed that counter right as if he was making a training video of how to do it. It exploded with concussive force on Pacquiao's face before his left glove could come up for protection and his body went limp. He toppled straight down on his chin, out before he hit the floor.

"I was starting to get careless because I thought I had him,"

10 SHOCKING KNOCKOUTS

JAMES J. CORBETT
KO 21
JOHN L. SULLIVAN
Sept. 7, 1892, New Orleans

Sullivan was as much myth as man, a national icon who everyone assumed was invincible. After all, he was only 33 and had nevaer lost a fight. Corbett was underestimated, though. Sullivan beat his opponents with brawn; Corbett was one of the first to use guile and technique to win. Sullivan, utterly baffled, had no chance.

MAX SCHMELING
KO 12
JOE LOUIS
June 19, 1936, New York

Louis, only 21, was unbeaten and a rising star when he agreed to fight the clever veteran from Germany. Too much, too soon? Schmeling took advantage of Louis' propensity to lower his left hand by landing one hard right after another, putting Louis down twice and finally ending matters in the 12th round. Louis would get his revenge two years later.

IRAN BARKLEY
KO 3
THOMAS HEARNS
June 6, 1988, Las Vegas

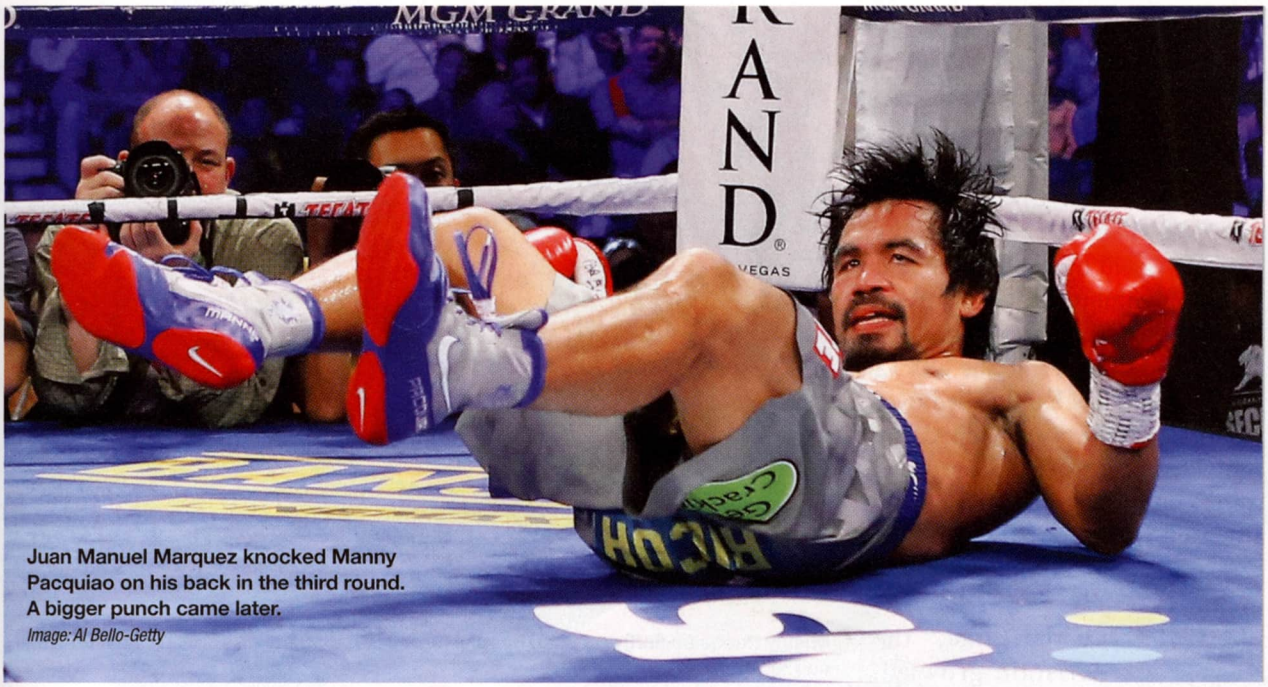
Hearns had lost only to Ray Leonard and Marvin Hagler and had regained the middleweight title by this time. Barkley, a solid fighter, had lost his only bid for a title against Sumbu Kalambay the previous year. Hearns seemed to be in control when a huge right by Barkley sent him crashing to the canvas. Hearns got up and then went down again, a beaten man.

BUSTER DOUGLAS
KO 10
MIKE TYSON
Feb. 11, 1990, Tokyo

Tyson, who had dismantled one terrified opponent after another, was believed by some to be unbeatable going into the fight. No one told Douglas, a 30-1 underdog. The challenger, a good boxer inspired by his mother's death, fought like a man on a mission. He survived a knockdown in Round 8 to shock the world. Tyson was never the same.

OLIVER McCALL
KO 2
LENNOX LEWIS
Sept. 24, 1994, London

Lewis, an Olympic gold medalist, had become a dominating pro and Britain's first heavyweight champ in a century. McCall was a decent fighter but not in Lewis' league. Or so it seemed. A right from nowhere put the giant down and hurt him, stunning everyone. Lewis got up but couldn't go on, according to the ref. Lewis KO'd McCall 2½ years later.



Juan Manuel Marquez knocked Manny Pacquiao on his back in the third round. A bigger punch came later.
Image: Al Bello-Getty

Pacquiao (54-5-2 38 knockouts) admitted after several minutes of stone unconsciousness followed by a glassy-eyed revival. "I was so overconfident I thought I got him. I never expected that punch. He got me a good one."

Many things had changed over the years between Pacquiao and Marquez but the most significant thing had not: When it counted most, Manny Pacquiao still could not escape Juan Manuel Marquez's right hand.

Pacquiao's body shuddered like a man walking along Broadway amid a howling ill wind in the dead of winter. Marquez's mouth turned into a wide O, as if he too was shocked at the utter destructiveness of that punch. Below them, Pacquiao's cutman, Miguel Diaz, had been preparing his enswell but dropped it back into the ice bucket, knowing it would not be needed.

"A fighter goes down like that, face first, it's over," Diaz said later

GEORGE FOREMAN
KO 10
MICHAEL MOORER
Nov. 5, 1994, Las Vegas

Moorer held two titles and was a 3-1 favorite when he fought the 45-year-old grill salesman, who was attempting to become the oldest ever to win a heavyweight belt. True to form, Moorer dominated the plodding old man for nine-plus rounds. Then, when all seemed lost, a right found its way through the champ's guard, Moorer was KO'd and history was made.

EVANDER HOLYFIELD
TKO 11
MIKE TYSON
Nov. 9, 1996, Las Vegas

Tyson had survived a stint in prison and had regained his position atop the heavyweight division when he finally met Holyfield, a 42-1 underdog coming off a sluggish performance against Bobby Czyz. Surprise! Holyfield broke down and beat up Tyson. The fight was stopped as he was pummeling "Mighty Mike" in the penultimate round.

ANTONIO TARVER
KO 2
ROY JONES JR.
May 15, 2004, Las Vegas

Jones became the first reigning heavyweight champ to win a light heavyweight title when he outpointed Tarver in their previous fight but looked vulnerable. In Jones-Tarver II, Tarver landed an overhand left to put his once-untouchable foe down and render him unable to continue. Jones is 7-7 in his last 14 fights, including Tarver's stunning KO victory.

HASIM RAHMAN
KO 5
LENNOX LEWIS
April 22, 2001, Gauteng, South Africa

Lewis was accused of being more interested in his small role in the film *Ocean's Eleven* than preparation for his fight against Rahman. He paid a steep price. Late in Round 5, Rahman, a 15-1 underdog who had mixed results going into the fight, landed a monstrous right that knocked Lewis flat on his back and he was counted out. Lewis never lost again.

CORRIE SANDERS
KO 2
WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO
March 8, 2003, Hanover, Germany

Klitschko seemed to have overcome problems that led to an upset knockout loss to Ross Puritty in 1998. Turns out he hadn't. Sanders, a big, quick-handed South African, stunned the champ's home-country fans and the world by putting Klitschko down four times before the fight was stopped. Sanders was murdered in 2012.

with the detachment of a doctor who has seen destruction too many times before to deny its existence.

Before the fight Marquez's Hall of Fame trainer, Nacho Beristain, had promised there would be no such toe-to-toe exchanges as the one that ended the fight, labeling it "an impossibility." After just such an impossibility had resulted in the boy he had trained since he was 12 finally having his hand raised over Pacquiao as he approached the equivalence of fistic old age, Beristain remained adamant that for all the glory that exchange had just brought his fighter, it was no way to box.

"I still think the same," the 72-year-old Beristain growled. "Juan Manuel Marquez will never fight toe-to-toe. He is one of the finest technical boxers in the world. Technical boxers don't fight toe-to-toe."

Sometimes they have no choice, and that was the case this time. Pacquiao began to pressure Marquez more and more after he was first knocked down, anger apparently erasing the need for caution.

For a time that seemed to serve Pacquiao well, but it was like a warm day in February – a false spring that led only to a chilling reminder of what winter means.

To not expect a counterpuncher to try and counter at any opportunity speaks to how the moment can overwhelm even the most seasoned boxer. Pacquiao had eaten more right-hand counters in the 42 rounds he'd fought with Marquez than in the rest of his 61-fight career, yet with the kind of dominating victory he craved so near, he forgot for a moment who he was in with.

"I knew the last three rounds Manny was going for the knockout," Marquez (55-6-1, 40 KOs) said. "I could have been knocked out at any time. I also knew I could knock him out. We knew he was going to come out aggressive, so we had a fight plan that was more technique and we were able to capitalize on it.

Image: Al Bello-Getty

Manny Pacquiao (left) and Juan Manuel Marquez engaged in a spirited brawl until the sudden ending.

"I never thought he was going to beat me. I was coming strong. I was fighting on the inside but with a lot of intelligence. I threw the perfect punch."

And it carried with it more than knockout power. In Pacquiao's corner, chaos broke out. His wife, shaking and in tears, had to be held back from entering the ring. As Pacquiao lay on the floor, veteran Getty Images photographer Al Bello jumped onto the ring apron to record the moment for history and was repelled first by Roach and then more violently by Pacquiao's manager Michael Koncz and assistant trainer Buboy Fernandez.

Koncz was captured on film grabbing Bello's shirt and a tearful Fernandez, who had been on his knees weeping when Bello first began to take photographs of the fallen Pacquiao, was caught going through the ropes as Bello retreated. Bello said Roach originally had asked him not to take a photo of Pacquiao on the ground but later apologized.

Bello, a well known figure at ringside of major fights, declined to press charges, seeking only an apology, but Nevada State Athletic Commission executive director Keith Kizer said he would review the incident and possibly level penalties on Koncz and Fernandez.

"What I find interesting is that neither of these gentlemen, nor anyone else on Team Pacquiao, had any problems when the photographers were doing their jobs and shooting pictures of Ricky Hatton after Manny knocked Hatton out," Kizer told Yahoo! Sports. It was a point that seemed to come with a clear message.

It was also symbolic of the chaos that reigned in boxing after Pacquiao fell. The crowd of 16,348 roared with a primal lust as the bloody Marquez circled the ring, waving to his supporters. Fans of both sides seemed to realize more than a fight had just been won, a point Roach had alluded to during the lead up to the match.

Image: Steve Marcus-Reuters

Some believe Manny Pacquiao (right) was taking charge when a tactical mistake cost him the fight.

"Everyone would like to see a knockout because (then) all the close fights would go to that person," Roach suggested. It was never a thought he felt would apply to Pacquiao, but that is where things stand today.

His fighter is $25 million richer but gone is talk of the long anticipated $100 million showdown with Mayweather, replaced by a loss that will haunt him for at least as long as it takes to make a fifth fight with his old nemesis.

Promoter Bob Arum was already hollering about that even as Pacquiao was being transported to a local hospital for a CT scan that proved negative and before drug tests of both fighters came back negative for steroids and PEDs, as Marquez had promised. Marquez later said he would agree to random, Olympic-style blood testing throughout training camp if a future fight is made but added, "As far as my future, what is coming, I don't want to even think about it. I want to go home and get some rest and celebrate with my family. I don't even want to think about who I fight next."

He may not, but Arum, ever the

promotional planner at age 81, already was.

"Manny was fighting a good fight," Arum said. "He ran into one. No excuses. Who wouldn't want to see it again?"

Not Jinkee Pacquiao, that's for sure, even though her husband assured his loyal constituency nothing about him had changed. Bernard Hopkins would argue otherwise but Pacquiao insisted, "First and foremost I would like to thank God for keeping Juan Manuel Marquez and me safe during our fight on Saturday night. I want to congratulate Juan Manuel. I have no excuses. It was a good fight and he deserved the victory. I think boxing fans who watched us were winners too.

"To all my fans, I would like to thank you for your prayers and assure you that I am fine. I am looking forward to a nice rest and then I will be back to fight."

Roach seemed a bit more reserved, saying only: "Possible retirement; possible rematch. I'm not sure which way we're going to go right now. It really depends on how he feels and what he wants to do.

"We'll get back in the gym and if I see signs of decline, I'll tell him to retire. I don't think we're at that point yet, but we have to see how he feels and what he wants to do. I'll definitely tell him to retire if he's not able to do it in the gym, but we have to see."

Meanwhile, a philosophical Manny Pacquiao returned from University Medical Center to his suite at TheHotel at Mandalay Bay and a family dinner before asking that a replay of the fight be shown. Although not everyone in his entourage was eager to watch, Pacquiao seemed sanguine.

"Spoiler alert," he said as the DVD played. "I don't think you are going to like how this ends."

It was a comment straight from a warrior's heart and a fighter's bravado but one that may have carried with it more weight than he could know. As Pacquiao watched his own demise in his darkened hotel suite, Marquez was across the street speaking only of taking a long rest with his family before any decisions would be made, perhaps knowing the time to retire might never again be more perfect.

He had won the only championship that mattered to him anymore. He had won the championship over Pacquiao, fulfilling the last real motivation he had left in boxing.

"I want to be able to retire with a victory over Manny Pacquiao," Marquez said before the fight. "People say I won (the other fights). Everyone knows I won (the third), but I want them to raise my hand."

When they finally did, Juan Manuel Marquez needed no judges to affirm his victory. His hand was raised. Fittingly, it was the right one. ■

Above, Juan Manuel Marquez put Manny Pacquiao to sleep with a single right counter. Below, Pacquiao (with wife Jinkee) was in good spirits upon his arrival in the Philippines a few days after the fight.

Images: Steve Marcus-Reuters and Jay Directo-AFP-Getty

Juan Manuel Marquez basks in the moment as his hand is raised in victory after his stunning knockout of Manny Pacquiao on Dec. 8 in Las Vegas.
Image: Al Bello-Getty

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JOSHUA: 'I WANT TO BE A DOMINANT FORCE'

By: **Gareth A Davies, *The Telegraph*, London**

Olympic super heavyweight gold medalist Anthony Joshua has started using his huge hands to block out the same old question battering his eardrums week after week: When is he joining the paid ranks?

The truth is, he really hasn't decided – yet. Though I understand his agent James Cook has been fielding endless calls and requests to sit down and ink the deal.

Time was when a fighter in Joshua's position would have jumped at a multi-million dollar deal to step into the world of the paid ranks. Times have changed. The lure to turn pro by the end of 2013 will be powerful but the wise counsel may be for Joshua to stay with the ground-breaking GB amateur set-up under Rob McCracken at the Institute of Sport in Sheffield at least until the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow in 2014. By then, Joshua will have built up to 70-80 fights, and his exposure and fan base in the UK will grow exponentially.

He carried an elbow injury through the Olympic tournament, he revealed to me when we spoke in December. "It's been a tough four years. After the World Championships, it was just no let up. All tough fights. The world champs took a lot out of me, and then it was straight into the Olympics, the next year. It was a new experience and as I've said, I had to take it all in. I'm just reflecting on everything and what I want to achieve. That's really what I've done since the Games."

"I'm back to training in Sheffield, in the routine, day after day, but still learning."

Joshua said he grew up through the Olympics, and that the 16 days in London changed him. "Honestly, I did grow up. You have to come out of the Olympics, or any experience in life like that, a new man from what you've been through."

"I think there did come a point in my life where I thought, 'I want to grow up a bit and I want to achieve great things through boxing,' and it did kind of hit me straight after the Games."

"At the time it was just another championship, but when the Olympics had finished, it felt like an important moment, a time to mature. I always said that everyone who becomes an Olympic champion has a responsibility. It's one thing having a medal around your neck, but then there is a lot of respon-

Image: Scott Heavey-Getty

Super heavyweight gold medalist Anthony Joshua seems to have the right mindset going forward.

Image: Scott Heavey-Getty

Rendall Munroe (left) announced his retirement after he was stopped by countryman Scott Quigg on Nov. 24.

sibility that comes with it. I just wanted to make sure I'm prepared for it and I wanted to be mature enough to handle it."

Joshua admits that he learned to handle pressure having to hold it together until the very last day of the Games. "I think it all happened for a reason, honestly, the way it all panned out, so I wouldn't change anything."

Assessing his moves and his future is a burning spear in his life. "You know what it is? ... I want to improve. I want to be a dominant force where I know I can't be beaten. And that's gonna come with experience, with more and more hours in the gym, and the world will be my oyster one day."

It echoes the sentiments of Lennox Lewis looking back on his career. Though he had lost in his first Olympics, in Los Angeles, he won the gilded prize in Seoul. "I'm aware of that," said Joshua.

"What he'd got from the first Olympic cycle, his experiences and learning, when he went to the second one, he said 'No I'm not losing, this is mine.'

"That's what the Olympics is about. I'm going to follow the path that others have already trodden, but it all begins and ends with how hard you are working in the gym."

He'll know when the time is right.

• • • • • • • • • •

Rendall Munroe, the former world title challenger and European junior featherweight champion has hung up his gloves at age 32. Munroe fought twice outside the U.K. – in Dublin and Japan – and ended with a 24-3-1 record.

His career highlight came in 2008 when his great fitness and toughness enabled him to outmuscle and outwork Kiko Martinez for the European title. Munroe went on to challenge Toshiaki Nishioka for the WBC junior featherweight belt in Tokyo, and put up a valiant fight in defeat.

What I most admired about Munroe was that he combined spit and sawdust in the gym with muck and brass, holding down a full-time job as a trashman in Leicester.

Talk about keeping your feet on the ground. He was as humble as you like, and he maintained that his work ethic – and love of reggae music – came from his father.

They used to say that Rendall was known by all in the Leicester suburbs, from the bins to rings.

Two Decembers past, I joined him and his crew on a particularly icy eight-hour shift, which starts in the damp and dark streets at 6:30 a.m. It is exhausting enough, yet Rendall runs the whole time he is emptying bins into the refuse truck. His crew were a great bunch of lads.

"For me, working and fighting are always part of the same job. My dad gave up boxing to work for the council as a roadsweeper to bring up our family," he explained when we went for a full English breakfast in a café afterward, steaming mugs of tea and buttered rounds of toast with plates three floors high in egg, bacon and sausage. Not Rendall, though.

He had porridge. "The way I always looked at it is that I get paid to stay fit, and socialize with people," he explained, as he and his muckers did the rounds.

The incredible part to this tale is that after his shift, he used to go on a 10-mile run. Well he did until his manager Mike Shinfield thought it was too much and put a stop to it.

• • • • • • • • •

Veteran boxing scribe Colin Hart will be inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in 2013. It cannot go without mention. Hart, 77 years young, the long-time columnist and former boxing correspondent of The Sun newspaper, has been guide and mentor to many of us in the U.K.

Ed Schuyler Jr., who was national boxing writer for the Associated Press between 1970 and 2002, was quick to call Colin at his home in Harrow, north London, from the United States after the announcement.

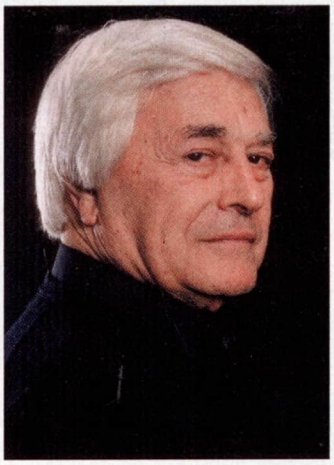
"Hi Colin, how are you?" Schuyler asked the great British boxing scribe in December. "Whatever I do, you follow. I win the Nat Fleischer Award, you win the Nat Fleischer Award. I'm inducted into the Hall of Fame, now you're inducted into the Hall of Fame. I'm just ringing to tell you that tomorrow, I'm going to jump off a bridge."

Hart told me that vignette with the characteristic detail and timing with which he recalls so many stories and incidents from almost 50 years around the sport.

Taking the doyen out to lunch means a 5:30 p.m. finish, when he's likely off to his next engagement. One minute he's telling me how one former Telegraph sports correspondent used to charter his own plane to athletics meetings, the next about a fight he'd covered before I was born.

His first fight abroad was in 1967, covering featherweight Howard Winstone's return fight against champion Vicente Saldivar in Mexico City in October 1967.

What a start in the U.S.A., however, with Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier's first fight of their trilogy at Madison Square Garden in 1971. He covered "The Rumble in the Jungle" and "The Thrilla in Manila," and rates the Ali years as the greatest to cover as a boxing correspondent.



COLIN HART

Colin even had an infamous set-to with George Foreman.

"He was fighting Ken Norton in Caracas. We were at the poolside, a group of British journalists. And George came down from his suite. I was smoking. "Hey, put that cigarette out now," he commanded me. "Say 'please,' I answered back."

Hart kept up the banter, and Foreman scowled. Foreman's PR guy Bill Caplan intervened before it got ugly. For Colin, that is.

The best advice Hart had as a young reporter, he recalls, came from Wally Bartleman, a renowned boxing correspondent of the London Evening Standard. "He told me, 'For the first twelve months ... eyes and ears open, mouth shut ... that's it.'

"I followed it to the letter, learning everything I could in every gym I could go to."

Colin joins Reg Gutteridge (2002), Harry Mullan (2005), Hugh McIlvanney (2009), and Harry Carpenter (2011) as the fifth British writer/observer to enter the Boxing Hall of Fame.

As Ed Schuyler was happy to tell all those who would listen. "If you can't write about boxing, you should be selling shoes. Boxing's a writer's sport. The material is so rich, the stories write themselves."

I'm off to throw all my shoes in the trash can.

Here's raising a glass to a phenomenal 2013 on both sides of the Pond, and to some potentially intriguing trans-Atlantic match-ups: Adrian Broner-Ricky Burns, Nathan Cleverly-Bernard Hopkins, Sergio Martinez-Martin Murray, Devon Alexander-Kell Brook, Tony Bellew-Chad Dawson, David Price-Tony Thompson. Cheers.

Gareth A Davies *is boxing correspondent for* The Daily Telegraph, *London.*

Miguel Cotto (left) had neither the size nor speed to cope with Austin Trout.
Image: Naoki Fukuda

AUSTIN TROUT UD 12
MIGUEL COTTO

DATE: DEC. 1, 2012
SITE: MADISON SQUARE GARDEN, NEW YORK CITY
DIVISION: JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHT
WEIGHTS: TROUT 154; COTTO 153½
RING RATING (GOING INTO FIGHT): TROUT NO. 9; COTTO NO. 2
NETWORK: SHOWTIME

One of boxing's more impressive streaks was Miguel Cotto's 7-0 record in Madison Square Garden appearances, keeping The Garden relevant even as its moniker "The Mecca of Boxing" became less accurate than nostalgic in the last decade. Austin Trout saw this fight as an opportunity to emerge from the obscurity of Las Cruces, N.M., by ending that streak, which is exactly what he did.

Fighting in front of a highly-partisan pro-Cotto crowd waving Puerto Rican flags, the southpaw boxer-puncher hammered out a unanimous-decision victory by scores of 117-111 on two cards and a too-wide 119-109 on the third.

"Miguel Cotto is a great fighter. It was just a great honor to be in this ring and an even greater honor to beat him in New York," Trout said. "To have my hand raised with a kingpin like Miguel Cotto, it is a dream come true. He wouldn't let me box, so I had to push him back and show him he had no advantage there."

The first half of the fight was highly competitive but Trout (26-0, 14 knockouts) took control in the latter rounds, consistently backing up Cotto with his right jab and straight left cross. As Cotto's left eye began to swell as a result of the pounding, Trout's confidence also began to swell and he cruised to the most-important victory of his career.

Cotto (37-4, 30 KOs), who lost a competitive decision to Floyd Mayweather Jr. in May, has now lost consecutive fights for the first time in his career. Many now wonder whether his long run at the highest level of the sport is nearing an end.

The 27-year-old Trout, who holds what the WBA calls its "regular" title, said he wants to unify all of the 154-pound title belts, beginning with "Canelo" Alvarez, who was at ringside to scout Cotto as a possible future opponent.

When asked about the scorecards, Cotto said: "I think it's an appreciation sport. Judges can see the fight and give the fight to whoever they want. (The scores of) 119-109, 117-111 is too far (from) what the people (saw) and what I (brought) into the ring."

- Ryan Songalia

Image: Naoki Fukuda

RING junior featherweight champion Nonito Donaire (right) overwhelmed veteran Jorge Arce.

NONITO DONAIRE KO 3
JORGE ARCE

DATE: DEC. 15, 2012
SITE: TOYOTA CENTER, HOUSTON
DIVISION: JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHT
WEIGHTS: DONAIRE 121½; ARCE 122
RING RATING (GOING INTO FIGHT): DONAIRE CHAMPION; ARCE UNRATED
NETWORK: HBO

Nonito Donaire wanted to end 2012, a year in which he may well have been prizefighting's best, with an exclamation point. He did exactly that. Pity Mexican Jorge Arce for being the dot at the bottom of that point.

Before a pro-Arce crowd of 7,250, Donaire outboxed, outclassed, outmaneuvered and in every other way outdid Arce, stopping the Mexican at 2:59 of Round 3 with a left hook that dropped him on the blue mat for a count much longer than 10.

"My left hook was my damaging punch," Donaire said after successfully defending his RING junior featherweight championship. "It was very strong. I could land it when I wanted to land it."

From the opening minute, Donaire (31-1, 20 knockouts) showed a resolution to end things violently, winging a vicious right uppercut that narrowly missed and might have ended the fight in its early seconds had it landed. Arce (61-7-2, 46 KOs) was forewarned.

The second round brought the first of three knockdowns for Donaire, when a right-cross counter caught Arce rushing in. Arce rose, and Donaire spent the remainder of the stanza endeavoring to get Arce back over his front foot in the hopes of ending the match.

"(Donaire's) power was unreal," the Filipino's trainer, Robert Garcia, said. "Beautiful. Perfect. Wherever Nonito hits you – head, side, neck – it's going to hurt. And it's going to hurt bad."

After stunning Arce with a counter right behind the ear in the final minute of Round 3, Donaire took hold of the moment and went for his spectacular ending. Arce rose from the match's second knockdown, retreated to the ropes and nodded, calling for Donaire to fight him. Donaire obliged, timing Arce with the left hook that closed the show.

It brought an end not only to the match but also Arce's career.

"I am retired," Arce said. "I promised my children that if I lost, I'd leave."

Donaire was quick to compliment the man he knocked unconscious moments before.

"Arce's a dear friend of mine," he said. "And he'll be a dear friend of mine for the rest of my life."

Pressed by retiring HBO commentator Larry Merchant for his 2013 plans and preferred opponents, Donaire said, "First off, I want to get (Abner) Mares."

- Bart Barry

Steve Cunningham (right) got in his licks against Tomasz Adamek but fell short on the scorecards. *Image: Ed Mulholland*

TOMASZ ADAMEK SD 12
STEVE CUNNINGHAM

DATE: DEC. 22, 2012
SITE: SANDS RESORT CASINO, BETHLEHEM, PA.
DIVISION: HEAVYWEIGHT
WEIGHTS: ADAMEK 223; CUNNINGHAM 203
RING RATING (GOING INTO FIGHT): ADAMEK NO. 3; CUNNINGHAM UNRATED
NETWORK: NBC

Tomasz Adamek escaped with a victory in his rematch with Steve Cunningham but it was hardly convincing.

Adamek was awarded a controversial split decision over Cunningham, who seemed to outbox and outwork his bigger opponent in an afternoon fight televised on NBC in the United States. Debra Barnes and Dave Greer scored it for Adamek 115-113 and 116-112, respectively, while Tom Miller had it 115-113 for Cunningham.

Cunningham (25-4, 12 knockouts) used movement and a sharp left jab, as well as dozens of solid rights, to frustrate Adamek (48-2, 29 KOs) much of the fight. However, Adamek, clearly the stronger of the two, pressured Cunningham throughout and landed his own hard punches.

The crowd at the Sands apparently expected Cunningham to get the decision because of his work rate. CompuBox stats indicate that he landed more punches, 209-169 overall. However, Adamek landed harder punches. The Pole had an edge of 120-80 in power shots, which seems to have impressed the two judges who scored the fight for him.

Bottom line: The fight was difficult to score as most rounds were very close.

Adamek also received a split-decision nod when they met as cruiserweights in 2008, as Cunningham was knocked down three times but still managed to make it a close fight.

Cunningham feels he was robbed on Saturday.

"Real men cry, real men shed tears," a very emotional Cunningham said after the fight. "You can't knock everyone out. We did our thing in the ring. It saddens me. I'm a two-time former world champ, I'm not Bernard Hopkins. I need these wins, I can't be getting cheated like this.

"It's sad, man, it's sad. It's nonsense. What needs to be done in boxing for this not to happen again? This isn't a game. What else do I have to do?"

Adamek felt he won by landing more power shots.

"The fight was close," he said. "My trainer told me I had to go after him after the eighth round, and I felt he ran against me. It was part of the plan to come on late in the last 20 seconds of each round.

"In a few rounds, I tried to attack him, and he would run. He ran, he didn't fight. I fought. It's why I won."

Cunningham countered that he was not running, but boxing

"That's what I did," he said. "I did the same thing that he did against Chris Arreola, when he boxed. He never touched me on the chin. I felt I had good head movement, and I fought smart. I plan on staying at heavyweight. I'm not going anywhere. I'm a heavyweight."

Adamek will now move on to fight Kubrat Pulev, with the winner scheduled to take on RING champion Wladimir Klitschko.

- Joseph Santoliquito

Yuriorkis Gamboa had to hold on for dear life against surprisingly tough Michael Farenas.
Image: Al Bello-Getty

DAVID PRICE KO 2 MATT SKELTON
NOV. 30, 2012 LIVERPOOL, ENGLAND

David Price, who many believe is the best heavyweight prospect in the world, continued his ascent in the sport with a second-round knockout of 45-year-old journeyman Matt Skelton in the 2008 Olympic bronze medalist's hometown.

Price, 29, buckled Sketlon (28-7, 23 KOs) with a right hand in the second round and then began pounding his overmatched opponent with body blows, ultimately dropping him with a left to the midsection. Skelton was on his knees wincing in pain as referee Richard Davies waved it off at 2:56.

Price (15-0, 13 KOs) is scheduled to take his first big step-up in class on Feb. 23, when he faces former title challenger Tony Thompson.

NO. 10 TYSON FURY UD 12 KEVIN JOHNSON
DEC. 1, 2012, BELFAST, NORTHERN IRELAND

Tyson Fury had no trouble with American Kevin Johnson, who once again was more willing to talk before a fight than actually compete. Fury (20-0, 14 KOs) won by scores of 119-108, 119-110 and 119-108.

Fury used an effective jab and combinations to win round after round. Johnson, who has good movement, put those skills to use but offered nothing in terms of offense. Even when in punching range, Johnson (28-3-1, 13 KOs) was more content to bob and weave. Fury landed some good shots but never hurt Johnson. The Englishman lost a point in the seventh for hitting on the break, costing him the shutout win on two cards.

With another dull performance, we'll be unlikely to see Johnson back on the air anytime soon.

NO. 5 KOKI KAMEDA SD 12 NO. 7 HUGO RUIZ
DEC. 4, 2012, OSAKA, JAPAN

Koki Kameda, who is wildly popular in Japan along with his brothers Daiki and Tomoki, won a controversial split decision over Mexico's Hugo Ruiz before his hometown fans.

One judge scored it for Ruiz, 117-113, overruled by tallies of 116-113 and 115-113 for Kameda.

Kameda (29-1, 17 KOs) sought to keep the fight on the outside while the larger Ruiz tried to close distance, but Kameda never seemed intent on engaging. It appeared Ruiz (31-2, 28 KOs) won many of the early rounds based on simply throwing punches and trying to force the fight. Kameda, though, did come on over the last three rounds and dominated them, bloodying Ruiz's nose.

YURIORKIS GAMBOA UD 12 MICHAEL FARENAS
DEC. 8, 2012, LAS VEGAS (HBO PPV)

Yuriorkis Gamboa returned to the ring after 15 months in glitzy style – promoter 50 Cent rapping his entrance – and emerged with a one-sided victory, out-

Image: Henning Bagger-AFP-Getty

A jubilant Mikkel Kessler needed less than three rounds to stop Brian Magee in Denmark.

pointing Filipino Michael Farenas by scores of 118-108, 117-108 and 117-109.

Things didn't go exactly as planned, though. Farenas (34-4-4, 26 KOs) provided more resistance than many expected and hurt Gamboa (22-0, 16 KOs) with a hellacious counter that put him down and hurt him badly in Round 9. He got up on wobbly legs but managed to make it out of the round. He also seemed rusty at times.

However, the Cuban controlled most of the rounds. He dropped Farenas twice, once in the second and again in the seventh, and the underdog sustained a cut in the third.

Gamboa was making his debut at 130 pounds, where he plans to campaign in 2013. Meanwhile, Farenas pleased the Filipino contingent in Vegas with the performance.

MIKKEL KESSLER TKO 3 BRIAN MAGEE

DEC. 8, 2012, HERNING, DENMARK

"The Danish Destroyer" continued his comeback from an eye injury, stopping the durable Brian Magee in three rounds.

The first three minutes were fought on even terms but Kessler (46-2, 35 KOs) took over in Round 2. He dropped the Irishman hard with a right to the body, a blow which nearly ended the contest. Kessler continued his body assault, dropping Magee (36-5-1, 25 KOs) a second time with another body shot. Kessler did it again in the third round, prompting referee Luis Pabon to call off the bout off at 24 seconds.

It was Kessler's fourth consecutive win since losing to Andre Ward in the first fight of the Super

A breathtaking right from Deontay Wilder instantly ended his fight against Kelvin Price.
Image: Tom Hogan-Hoganphotos

Six World Boxing Classic in 2009. As this went to press, Kessler and Carl Froch were close to finalizing a rematch of their excellent action fight from the same tournament for the spring.

NO. 2 MIGUEL VAZQUEZ UD 12 MERCITO GESTA
DEC. 8, 2012, LAS VEGAS (HBO PPV)

Miguel Vazquez successfully defended his IBF lightweight title for the fifth time, easily outpointing Filipino Mercito Gesta in a stinker of a fight. The scores were 119-109, 118-110 and 117-111.

Vazquez (33-3, 13 KOs) used his boxing ability and excellent jab to frustrate Gesta (26-1-1, 14 KOs) the entire fight. He circled, stepped away and kept Gesta at bay, with nary an exchange in the bout. Gesta, known for his pressure style, followed Vazquez dutifully around the ring but never caught him.

The crowd booed a number of times and neither fighter figures to be back on TV any day soon. Vazquez also stunk it out in his lone HBO appearance back in October.

DEONTAY WILDER KO 3 KELVIN PRICE
DEC. 15, 2012, LOS ANGELES (SHOWTIME)

Deontay Wilder (26-0, 26 KOs) punctuated a productive year with a spectacular one-punch knockout of 37-year-old Kelvin Price.

The first two rounds were devoid of action as the pair of 6-foot-7 men tried to find their range.But Wilder reminded everyone why he is considered a legitimate prospect when he drilled Price with an overhand right that blasted him onto his back and nearly through the ropes. Price (13-1, 6 KOs) sought to beat the count but fell a second time, prompting referee Ray Corona to wave it off at 51 seconds.

Wilder, 27, fought six times in 2012 against limited opposition. As one of the two best American

heavyweight prospects – along with Bryant Jennings – he figures to step up in 2013.

NO. 4 LEO SANTA CRUZ UD 12 ALBERTO GUEVARA
DEC. 15, 2012, LOS ANGELES (CBS)

Boxing's return to CBS, the first fight on the network since Bernard Hopkins stopped Glen Johnson, was a rousing success. Not only did the fight draw good ratings (2 million viewers) but it was also an entertaining scrap from start to finish.

Little-known challenger Alberto Guevara (16-1, 6 KOs) gave a great account of himself, pushing Leo Santa Cruz (23-0-1, 13 KOs) to the limit in an attempt to take Santa Cruz's IBF bantamweight title before coming up short. The scores were 116-112, 118-110 and 119-109.

Santa Cruz threw a lot of punches, which is typical of him, but he wasn't quite as active as usual. He averaged 82 shots thrown per round, compared to his average of 106 in his other four fights in 2012.

Guevara (16-1, 6 KOs) did very well in the early rounds, but Santa Cruz made adjustments and controlled the last half of the fight. He outlanded Guevara 133-44 in power shots over the final six rounds, leading to his third successful title defense.

NO. 2 AMIR KHAN TKO 10 CARLOS MOLINA
DEC. 15, 2012, LOS ANGELES (SHOWTIME)

Junior welterweight Amir Khan bounced back from consecutive losses with a strong performance against prospect Carlos Molina at the old Sports Arena in Los Angeles.

Khan (27-3, 19 KOs) dished out a lot of punishment with his trademark blinding speed, albeit against a much smaller man coming up in weight and class. Molina (17-1-1, 7 KOs) showed a lot of heart in the face of all the punches he took, but his trainer, Clemente Medina, threw in the towel after the completion of the 10th round.

Molina was cut over his left eye in the first round, and the blood bothered him the remainder of the bout. The underdog fought aggressively but was never able to get inside and couldn't deal with the size and speed disparity. Khan is scheduled to return in April on Showtime.

NO. 5 ARTHUR ABRAHAM TKO 8 MEHDI BOUADLA
DEC. 15, 2012, NUREMBERG, GERMANY

Arthur Abraham made the first defense of his WBO super middleweight title with a dominant victory over lightly-regarded Frenchman Mehdi Bouadla, stopping his foe in the eighth round.

Abraham (36-3, 28 KOs) cut Bouadla over his right eye and the gash bled the whole fight, limiting the challenger's vision. Bouadla (26-5, 11 KOs) was game and took a lot of punishment, but offered little resistance. He ate jabs, body shots and power shots to the point of exhaustion when he took a knee in Round 8. Referee Mark Nelson didn't call it a knockdown, but Abraham continued to dish out a beating and was landing at will when Nelson finally stepped in at 2:11 and halted the bout, handing Bouadla his first defeat since a 2011 loss to Mikkel Kessler. Abraham has a bevy of options going forward into the new year.

ALFREDO ANGULO UD 10 JORGE SILVA
DEC. 15, 2012, LOS ANGELES (SHOWTIME)

Mexican knockout artist Alfredo Angulo continued his comeback after spending eight months in an immigration detention center but he had to settle for a rare decision victory in a slugfest.

Perhaps most importantly, Angulo (22-2, 18 KOs) got in 10 much-needed rounds to remove any residual rust as 20-year-old Jorge Silva (19-3-2, 15 KOs) pushed him to the limit, happy to absorb shots to land his own. The scores were close, but Angulo earned the nod in the final three rounds on all three cards. All three judges scored it 97-93.

Silva, coming up in weight from 147, seemed to have trouble with Angulo's size as the fight wore on but proved to be durable and was willing to trade punches until the final bell. That spirit undoubtedly improved his stock.

Angulo, 30, figures to be in a big fight sometime in 2013.

NO. 8 GEORGE GROVES UD 12 GLEN JOHNSON
DEC. 15, 2012, LONDON

The career of Glen Johnson was celebrated when he announced his retirement in the summer of 2012 after a loss to Andrzej Fonfara. He might've wise to stay out of the ring.

Super middleweight contender George Groves used his once-excellent opponent as a stepping stone, winning a near-shutout decision before his hometown fans. The scores were 120-107, 119-109 and 120-107.

Known for having a granite chin, Johnson even tasted the canvas when Groves landed a combination that put him down toward the end of the 12th.

Groves (16-0, 12 KOs) gained some much-needed experience in the bout and added a big name to his resume. Johnson (51-18-2, 35 KOs) applied pressure throughout but landed few punches of consequence while Groves countered and landed stiff jabs and power shots.

Johnson, 43, is now 2-6 in his last eight fights.

THROUGH DEC. 22, 2012

Heavyweight prospect David Price (right) made quick work of 45-year-old Matt Skelton on Nov. 30 in Liverpool, England, scoring a second-round knockout.
Image: Chris Brunskill-Getty

HEAVYWEIGHTS

DAVID PRICE KO 2 MATT SKELTON
TYSON FURY W 12 KEVIN JOHNSON
ALEXANDER FLORES KO 2 MATT HICKS
ANDY RUIZ JR. KO 3 ELIJAH MCCALL
DENIS BAKHTOV W 10 DANNY WILLIAMS
BRYANT JENNINGS KO 5 BOWIE TUPOU
VINNY MADDALONE KO 3 BYRON POLLEY
LUCAS BROWNE KO 3 JASON GAVERN
NEVEN PAJKIC W 10 SHANE ANDREESEN
MICHAEL SPROTT W 10 EDMUND GERBER
DEONTAY WILDER KO 3 KELVIN PRICE
MANUEL CHARR KO 1 KONSTANTIN AIRICH
TOMASZ ADAMEK W 12 STEVE CUNNINGHAM

CRUISERWEIGHTS

ISIAH THOMAS W 10 RICHARD HALL
BRAIMAH KAMOKO KO 7 PASCAL NDOMBA
MATEUSZ MASTERNAK W 12 JUHO HAAPOJA
GIACOBBE FRAGOMENI W 12 SILVIO BRANCO
NEIL DAWSON KO 1 TONY CONQUEST
DENIS LEBEDEV KO 4 SANTANDER SILGADO
GRIGORY DROZD W 12 JEAN MARC MONROSE

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS

JACKSON JUNIOR KO 2 JOSE ALBERTO CLAVERO
MARK FLANAGAN KO 11 KARIZ KARIUKI
UMBERTO SAVIGNE W 10 DHAFIR SMITH
RUDY MARKUSSEN KO 1 DANIEL REGI
PAWEL GLAZEWSKI KO 3 OLEKSANDR GARASHCHENKO
JEAN PASCAL W 10 ALEKSY KUZIEMSKI
ELEIDER ALVAREZ KO 8 DANNY MCINTOSH
BOB AJISAFE W 10 TRAVIS DICKINSON

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS

PETER MANFREDO JR. W 10 RAYCO SAUNDERS
DEAN FRANCIS KO 10 JUSTYN HUGH
ISAAC EKPO KO 2 SAID MADA HAMOU
MIKKEL KESSLER KO 3 BRIAN MAGEE
DARREN BARKER KO 4 KERRY HOPE
JAMES DEGALE W 12 FULGENCIO ZUNIGA
EZEQUIEL MADERNA KO 7 CLAUDIO ABALOS
ARTHUR ABRAHAM KO 8 MEHDI BOUADLA
GEORGE GROVES W 12 GLEN JOHNSON
WILL ROSINSKY W 10 OTIS GRIFFIN
MARCO ANTONIO RUBIO KO 11 MICHEL ROSALES

MIDDLEWEIGHTS

LES SHERRINGTON KO 8 RANDY SUICO
DANIEL JACOBS KO 5 CHRIS FITZPATRICK
JOHN RYDER KO 8 EAMONN O'KANE
CRAIG MCEWAN KO 2 MARIUSZ BISKUPSKI
DAVID LEMIEUX KO 2 ALBERT AYRAPETYAN
BRUNO SANDOVAL KO 2 ALBERTO MARTINEZ
BILLY JOE SAUNDERS W 12 NICK BLACKWELL
JARROD FLETCHER W 12 ROBBIE BRYANT
BILLI GODOY W 10 CRISTIAN RIOS

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS

DOMONIQUE DOLTON W 10 RICHARD GUTIERREZ
AUSTIN TROUT W 12 MIGUEL COTTO
LENNY BOTTAI KO 9 HARUN AKCABELEN
GUIDO PITTO KO 8 REDA ZAM ZAM
DAVID ZEGARRA KO 4 ORLANDO DE JESUS ESTRADA
DAMIAN JONAK W 10 JACKSON OSEI BONSU
ERICK OCHIENG W 10 MAX MAXWELL
BRIAN ROSE W 12 SAM WEBB
JACK CULCAY KO 5 JEAN MICHEL HAMILCARO
LIAM SMITH W 12 STEVE O'MEARA
HUGO CENTENO JR. KO 6 ALLEN CONYERS

WELTERWEIGHTS

PABLO MUNGUIA W 12 ANTONIO PITALUA
DENTON VASSELL KO 6 RONNIE HEFFRON
ED PAREDES W 10 HECTOR MUNOZ
LEONARD BUNDU KO 1 ISMAEL EL MASSOUDI
YORDENIS UGAS W 10 COSME RIVERA
(F) HOLLY HOLM W 10 DIANA PRAZAK
WALE OMOTOSO NC 2 IRVING GARCIA
JESSIE VARGAS W 10 VITO GASPARYAN
KENNY ABRIL W 8 DENNIS LAURENTE
JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ KO 6 MANNY PACQUIAO
MARCOS MAIDANA KO 3 ANGEL MARTINEZ
WALTER CASTILLO KO 3 LUIS BETANCO
SHAWN PORTER D 10 JULIO DIAZ
FRANKIE GOMEZ KO 1 PAVEL MIRANDA
TEERACHAI KRATINGDAENGGYM KO 5 TAKEJIRO KATO

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS

(F) FERNANDA ALEGRE KO 4 DIANA AYALA
KHABIB ALLAKHVERDIEV TD 8 JOAN GUZMAN
DENIS SHAFIKOV W 12 ALBERT MENSAH
PAUL SPADAFORA W 10 SOLOMON EGBERIME
ZOLANI MARALI W 12 ALI FUNEKA
RICARDO WILLIAMS JR. KO 5 LUIS RAMOS JR.
JAY SOLMIANO KO 2 RUSMIN KIE RAHA
SERGEI FEDCHENKO W 12 AZAD AZIZOV
AMIR KHAN KO 10 CARLOS MOLINA
VICTOR CAYO W 10 VLADIMIR BAEZ
CLEOTIS PENDARVIS KO 5 MICHAEL CLARK

LIGHTWEIGHTS

FERMIN DE LOS SANTOS W 12 ARTURO GOMEZ
RAYMUNDO BELTRAN W 10 JI-HOON KIM
ANTHONY CROLLA W 10 KIERAN FARRELL
EDIS TATLI KO 1 PAOLO GASSANI
PAULUS MOSES W 12 JEREMIAS CASTILLO
MIGUEL VAZQUEZ W 12 MERCITO GESTA
JOSE FELIX JR. KO 3 MEACHER MAJOR
EDUARD TROYANOVSKY KO 2 WALTER ESTRADA
ABNER COTTO KO 7 SERGIO PEREZ

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS

DAIKI KANEKO KO 6 RYOTA KAJIKI
(F) KINA MALPARTIDA W 10 MARYLIN HERNANDEZ
YURIORKIS GAMBOA W 12 MICHAEL FARENAS
LOGAN MCGUINNESS W 10 CARLOS REYES

FEATHERWEIGHTS

VIOREL SIMION KO 4 RYAN SERMONA
CLAUDIO MARRERO KO 4 MAURICIO MARTINEZ
JAYSON VELEZ KO 3 SALVADOR SANCHEZ
NICHOLAS WALTERS KO 7 DAULIS PRESCOTT
CARLOS ZAMBRANO KO 7 JOSE MIGUEL PAYARES
JAVIER FORTUNA W 12 PATRICK HYLAND
ERIC HUNTER W 10 JERRY BELMONTES
JUN DOLIGUEZ KO 5 ERIC RAPADA
HIROSHIGE OSAWA KO 9 JASON BUTAR BUTAR
(F) DAHIANA SANTANA W 10 HELEN JOSEPH
HISASHI AMAGASA W 10 MASAYUKI WAKIMOTO
HOZUMI HASEGAWA W 10 ARTURO SANTOS REYES

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS

SOD KOKIETGYM KO 3 ELMAR FRANCISCO
DAIKI KAMEDA W 10 JAMES MOKOGINTA
TOMOKI KAMEDA KO 4 REY LAS PINAS
JESSE MAGDALENO W 8 JONATHAN ARRELLANO
RAUL HIRALES W 10 OSCAR GONZALEZ
MACBUTE SINYABI W 12 PFARISO NELUVHULANI
TSHIFHIWA MUNYAI W 12 OSCAR CHAUKE
KID GALAHAD KO 4 IVAN MOROTE
HIDENORI OTAKE W 10 MIKIHITO SETO
GENARO CAMARGO KO 5 RUBEN TAMAYO

Amir Khan (left) stopped overmatched Carlos Molina in 10 rounds on Dec. 15 in Los Angeles, Khan's first fight since he was stopped by Danny Garcia.
Image: Harry How-Golden Boy-Getty

RENE ALVARADO KO 7 EUSEBIO OSEJO
NONITO DONAIRE KO 3 JORGE ARCE
THABO SONJICA KO 3 SIMPHIWE NONGQAYI

BANTAMWEIGHTS

JUAN CARLOS PAYANO W 10 JOSE LUIS ARAIZA
KOKI KAMEDA W 12 HUGO RUIZ
ANTHONY SETTOUL W 12 CRAIG LYON
JOSE NIEVES KO 2 GLENN PORRAS
FRANCIS MIYEYUSHO KO 10 NASIBU RAMADHAN
(F) SABRINA PEREZ W 10 STEFANY BIZQUIAZO
STEPHANE JAMOYE KO 8 LEE HASKINS
LEO SANTA CRUZ W 12 ALBERTO GUEVARA
JULIO CEJA KO 2 EDEN MARQUEZ
MALCOLM TUNACAO KO 7 CHRISTIAN ESQUIVEL

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS

JOSE SALGADO W 12 DEVIS PEREZ
MARCO DEMECILLO KO 3 JESSIE TUYOR
SRISAKET SOR RUNGVISAI KO 2 ALVIN BAIS
OMAR NARVAEZ W 12 DAVID QUIJANO
ARTHUR VILLANUEVA W 12 TAIKI ETO

FLYWEIGHTS

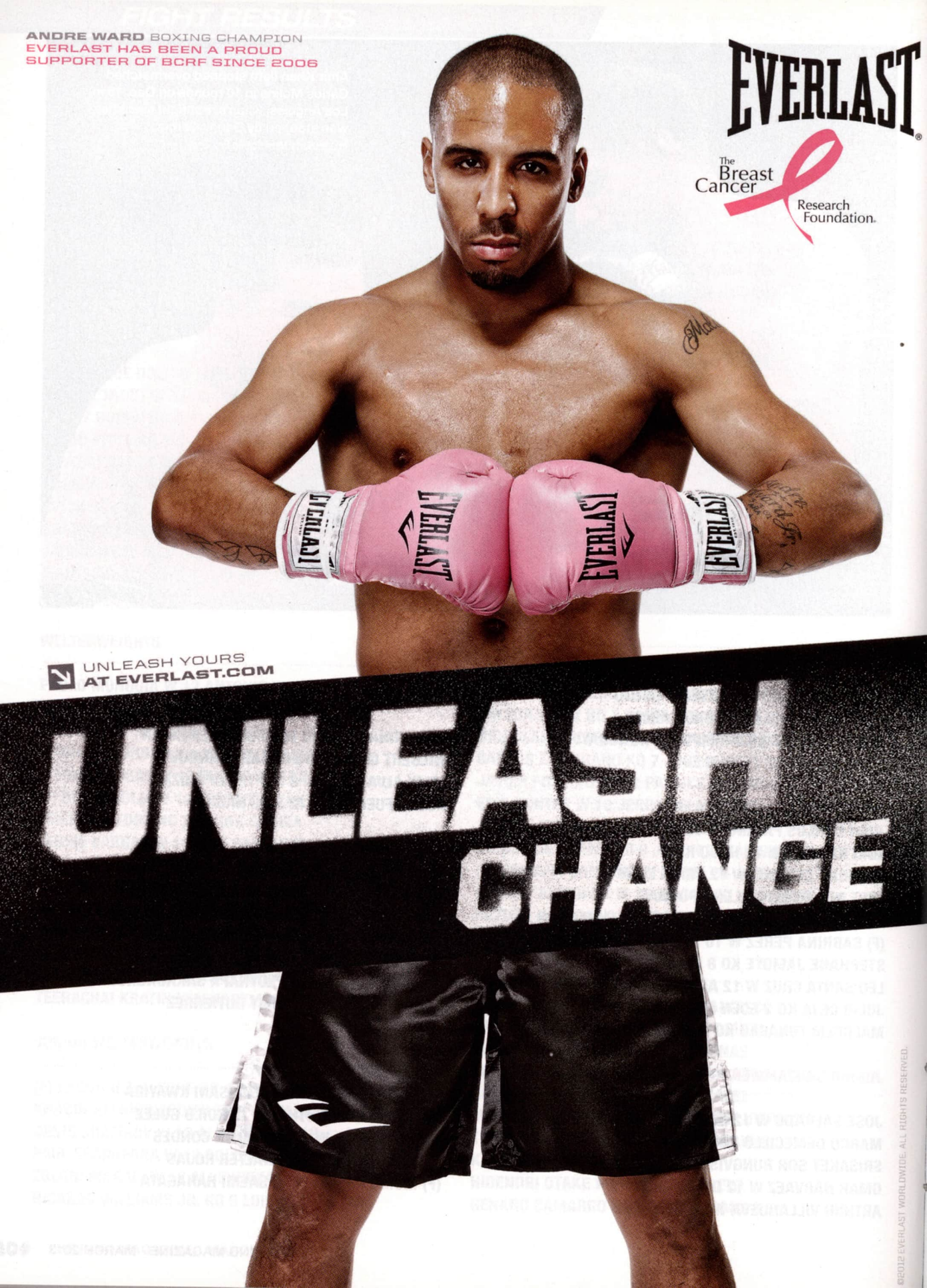
(F) CARINA MORENO W 10 SUSI KENTIKIAN
WILBERT UICAB W 12 OSCAR BLANQUET
FELIX ALVARADO KO 3 NERYS ESPINOZA
ROCKY FUENTES W 12 YUKI NASU

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS

PAIPHAROB KOKIETGYM W 12 ROQUE LAURO
KOMPAYAK PORPRAMOOK KO 6 JOHAN WAHYUDI
JOEBERT ALVAREZ KO 6 JERRY TOMOGDAN
RANDY PETALCORIN KO 3 JOVEL ROMASASA
(F) JU HEE KIM KO 10 PLOYNAPA SAKRUNGRUENG
RAUL GARCIA KO 3 SAMMY GUTIERREZ

STRAWWEIGHTS

SIMPHIWE KHONCO KO 9 ZUKISANI KWAYIBA
WANHENG MENAYOTHIN W 12 ROILO GOLEZ
DONNY MABAO W 12 FLORANTE CONDES
NKOSINATHI JOYI KO 1 WALTER ROJAS
(F) MOMO KOSEKI W 10 SAEMI HANAGATA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CHANGE IS GOOD

By: **T.K. Stewart**

The old saying is that "variety is the spice of life" and that axiom definitely applies to training routines in the sweet science. While there is no harm in running the hills in the countryside on a daily basis, for most fighters performing the same routine in the gym day after day leads to boredom, complacency and stagnant results.

"It's important to introduce new drills, different exercises and continually mix it up when it comes to programs," says Alex Ariza, best known as the strength and conditioning coach for Manny Pacquiao and Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. "The same rule applies to any sport, not just boxing. Whether you're a basketball player or whatever sport you participate in, it's important to vary training routines so that your muscles and your mind don't get used to doing the same thing over and over."

Most agree that the key to the continuous development and evolution of a fighter is to vary training routines, intensity, frequency and duration.

"All you have to do is look at Juan Manuel Marquez and you can see a fighter that has improved and continued to improve at the world class level, which is very, very difficult to do," said Teddy Atlas. "Here's a guy, pudgy as a welterweight when he fought Mayweather three years ago and now look at the change in him, his performance, his physique. Here's a guy that worked very, very hard to begin with, but then he decided to change it up because he knew he had to. He knew if he wanted to get where he wanted to be that he had to change what he was doing. He did that and the results speak for themselves."

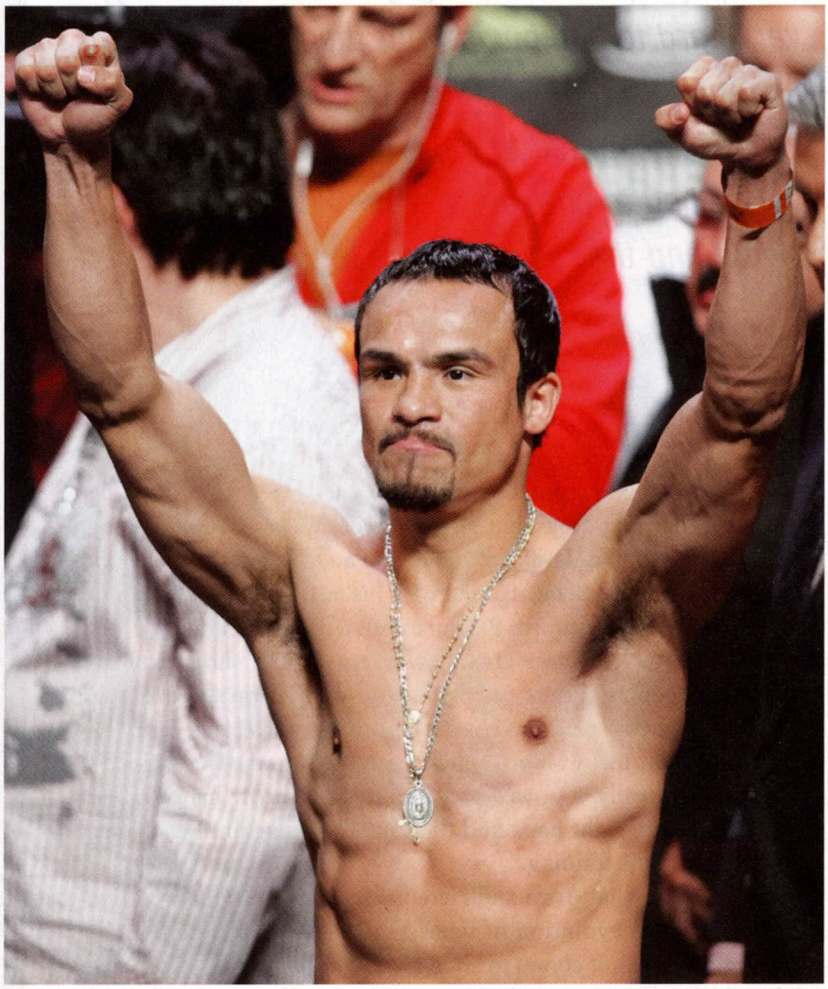

Image: John Gurzinski-AFP-Getty

Juan Manuel Marquez apparently has benefitted from a varied training regimen.

Certainly the success of Marquez, at the advanced age of 39, no less, is a testament to what incorporating a range of new training routines and exercises into a regimen can and will do for a fighter if they are willing to work hard. Even Ariza was forced to admit that Marquez, in working with Angel Heredia, was able to transform not only his body but also his overall performance.

"None of Marquez's success is shocking to me at all," explained Ariza. "He had a very well educated strength coach and he followed the program to the letter. That's what happens when you follow a program set out for you by somebody that knows what they are doing. When a fighter dedicates themselves, when they do their strength and conditioning and when they eat

"Here's a guy, pudgy as a welterweight when he fought Mayweather three years ago and now look at the change in him, his performance, his physique. Here's a guy that worked very, very hard to begin with, but then he decided to change it up because he knew he had to. He knew if he wanted to get where he wanted to be that he had to change what he was doing. He did that and the results speak for themselves."
– Teddy Atlas

right and train right and they block out all the distractions, then they will always improve."

Heredia has a long reputation of dealing in steroids and other performance enhancing drugs, but he is also very well versed in a myriad of training techniques designed to increase an athlete's speed, flexibility and power. He implemented many of his techniques with Marquez in preparation for the fourth Pacquiao bout, as Ariza noted:

"Marquez was lifting weights, he was training in short explosive bursts, he was doing sprints and plyometrics to develop speed. He was doing short, quick repetitions of different types of exercises every day, which helps him throw short, quick, real hard shots. This helped to turn him into, really, a power puncher. He can throw his shots, rest a bit and then go right back and do it again and again. He changed himself though his training."

While none of what Ariza and Heredia do today is necessarily revolutionary, it is an evolution of what Mackie Shilstone, perhaps the guru of gurus when it comes to strength and conditioning coaches, introduced into the sport nearly 30 years ago. Wind sprints and weight lifting were unheard of in boxing (unless you count Rocky Balboa and Apollo Creed running on the beach in Rocky III) until Shilstone transformed Michael Spinks from a lanky 175-pounder into a speedy and moderately powerful 200-pound man who lifted Larry Holmes' heavyweight crown in 1985. Shilstone later repeated the trick when he helped Roy Jones Jr. transform himself into a heavyweight champion.

What is clear is that the methods of these coaches do seem to work when the athletes buy into the idea. While skipping rope and wailing away on heavy bags will always have a place in the sport, as time goes on, the old methods will be supplanted.

"I always admired Mackie," explains trainer Buddy McGirt, who was trained in the old school methods by Al Certo. "I remember when he trained Spinks and he had him jumping on these boxes and running sprints, running stairs, all sorts of different kinds of things. Back then in the 80s you didn't hear too much about that, but it turned out it works." ■

THE BEST OF 2012

By: **Ryan Songalia**

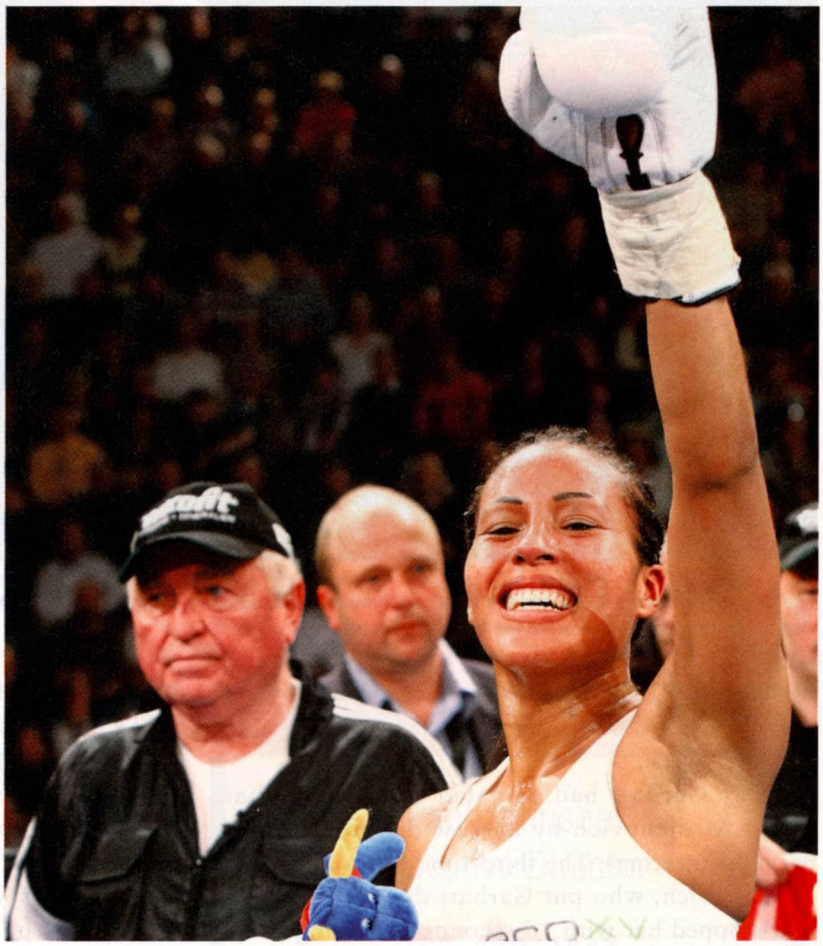

Image: Martin Rose-Bongarts-Getty

Cecilia Braekhus earned Fighter of the Year honors with her convincing victory over Anne Mathis.

FIGHTER OF THE YEAR
CECILIA BRAEKHUS

Braekhus is arguably the best technical boxer in women's boxing today but figured to have a tough time against Anne Sophie Mathis, the heavy-handed Frenchwoman who had knocked out Holly Holm in 2011. Instead, the unbeaten Norwegian fighter made a huge statement by winning seven of 10 rounds on all three cards in a dominating performance Sept. 22 in Denmark. She also outpointed capable Jessica Balogun in June. After the Mathis fight, Braekhus (21-0, 5 KOs) called out Holm in a PR campaign aimed at matching the sport's two most-prominent figures.

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FIGHT OF THE YEAR
MARIANA JUAREZ SD 10 ARELY MUCINO

Mucino seemed to be poised to get her signature victory at the expense of her countrywoman, who was making the sixth defense of her WBC flyweight title May 12 in Polanco, Mexico. The challenger pushed the pace early, landing heavy body shots and ripping left hooks on "Barbie." However, Juarez played it cool and turned Mucino's aggression against her in the second round, knocking her to the canvas with a flurry of punches. Mucino not only survived but brought the fight to her better-schooled opponent until the final bell of an entertaining, back-and-forth brawl. Juarez won a split decision – but she had to earn it.

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ROUND OF THE YEAR
YESICA MARCOS VS. ANA JULATON ROUND 2

Julaton put Marcos on the canvas with a left hook in the second round before 40,000 stunned fans March 16 in a stadium in San Martin, Argentina, Marcos' hometown. Marcos got up only to take a battering from Julaton, who tried to finish the job. However, the hometown favorite regained her wits and landed five straight left uppercuts to back Julaton off and delight the crowd. By the end of the round, Marcos was in control, landing hooks and uppercuts that penetrated Julaton's defense. Marcos went on to win a unanimous decision, taking Julaton's WBO junior featherweight title in the process.

Image: Jack Guez-AFP

The debut of women's boxing in the London Olympics – including this fight between Natasha Jones (right) and Queen Underwood – was an enormous step forward for female fighters.

KNOCKOUT OF THE YEAR
JELENA MRDJENOVICH TKO1 LINDSAY GARBATT

Lindsay Garbatt had defeated fellow Canadian Jelena Mrdjenovich by narrow decisions in two previous meetings. The third time was a charm for Mrdjenovich, who put Garbatt down three times and stopped her with 15 seconds remaining in the only round March 23 in Edmonton. Mrdjenovich had already put Garbatt down twice when she landed a right cross followed by a left hook, which sent a wobbly-legged Garbatt reeling into the ropes. She was unable to continue.

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UPSET OF THE YEAR
MELISSA McMORROW MD SUSI KENTIKIAN

The San Francisco fighter entered her bout against Kentikian having lost two of her previous four fights but marched into her unbeaten opponent's home country, Germany, to out-hustle the "Killer Queen" and win a majority decision and the WBO flyweight title on May 16.

COMEBACK OF THE YEAR
LAYLA McCARTER

McCarter (35-13-5, 8 KOs) was a lightweight titleholder in the early 2000s but, having fought just three times in the previous four years and coming off a 13-month ring absence, it seemed the 33-year-old from Las Vegas was biting off more than she could chew by jumping to junior middleweight to face Noni Tenge for the vacant WBA title. The ring rust was no obstacle as McCarter dominated Tenge, stopping the previously unbeaten South African on her home turf in eight rounds.

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TRAINER OF THE YEAR
MIGUEL REYES

The resident of Tijuana, Mexico, was able to guide his lone pupil, Jackie Nava, back from a loss and a draw to rival Ana Maria Torres to a 3-0 record in 2012. Employing a smarter boxer-puncher strategy than the aggressive approach she brought to her battles with Torres, Nava lost just a single round on one scorecard all year long. In the process she annexed the WBA junior featherweight title with a

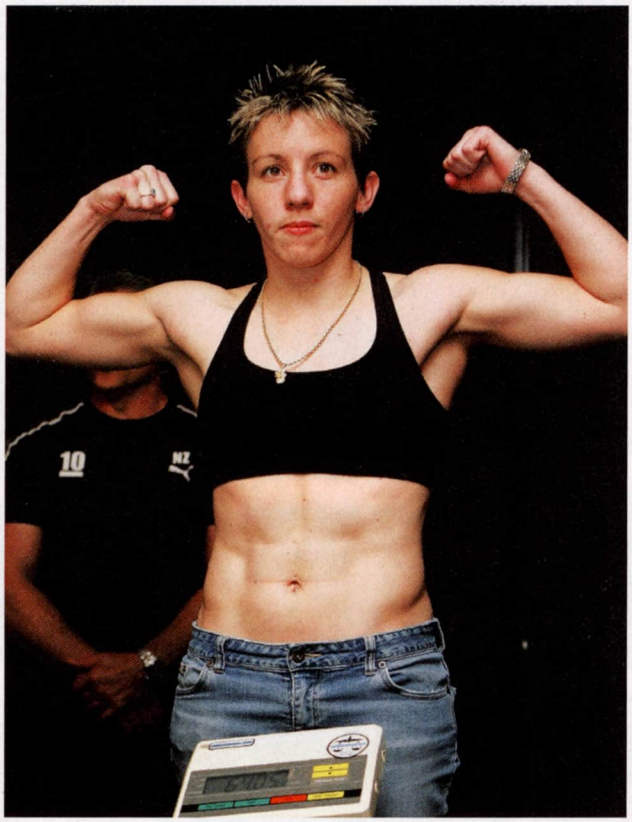

Image: Sandra Mu-Getty

Layla McCarter proved in 2012 that she has more fight in her.

dominating victory over Chanttall Martinez. Nava ended the year by handing former titleholder Lisa Brown her first knockout loss.

PROSPECT OF THE YEAR

CINDY AMADOR

Amador (9-0, 1 KO), of Riverside, Calif., came of age in 2012. She won each of her three fights, including victories over previously unbeaten Amaris Quintana and Carina Moreno. Moreno would go on to defeat Susi Kentikian to win the WBA flyweight title.

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EVENT OF THE YEAR

WOMEN'S OLYMPIC BOXING

It took 116 years, but women boxers finally got the chance to represent their nations in the Olympics. Women were only given three weight divisions in the London Games, but they managed to steal the show on days they competed. Nicola Adams of Great Britain, Katie Taylor of Ireland and Claressa Shields of the United States won top honors at flyweight, lightweight and middleweight, respectively.

Special thanks to Mark Jones for consultation.

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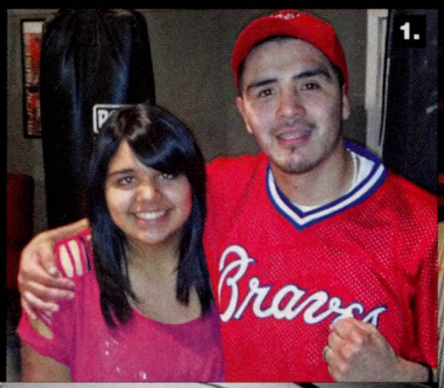
"Boxers must be part of the equation."

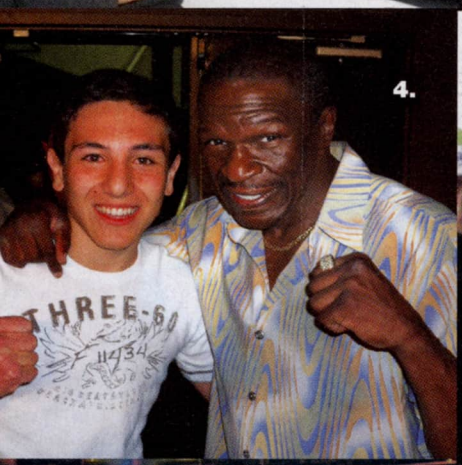
— BOC Member José Chegüi Torres

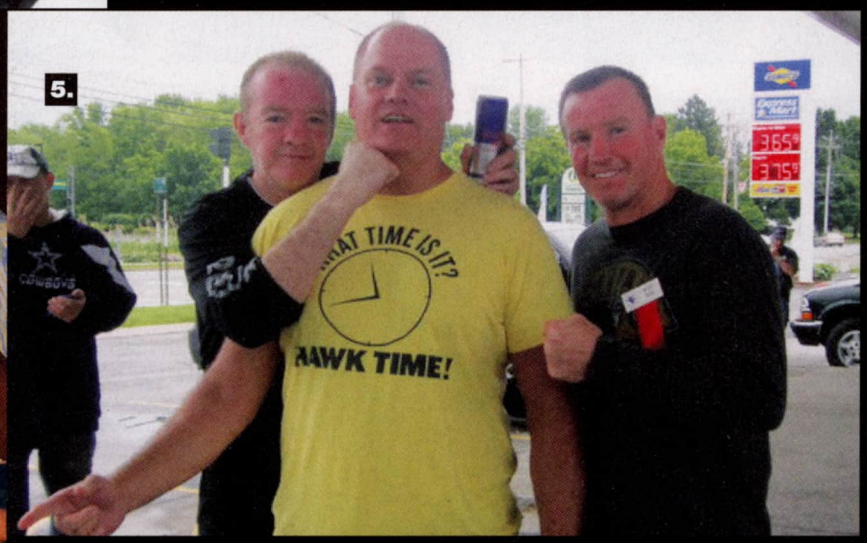
LONG COUNT: One of the great tales in boxing is the "long count" fight between Jack Dempsey and Gene Tunney in 1927. Dempsey, behind in the fight, put Tunney down but forgot the new rule requiring fighters to retreat to a neutral corner in the event of a knockdown, which forced referee Dave Barry to delay his count until Dempsey complied. That gave Tunney a few extra seconds to recover. In this classic photo, Tunney appears to be alert as he watches Barry give his count. That might support Tunney's contention that he could've gotten up at any time. Tunney won a decision.

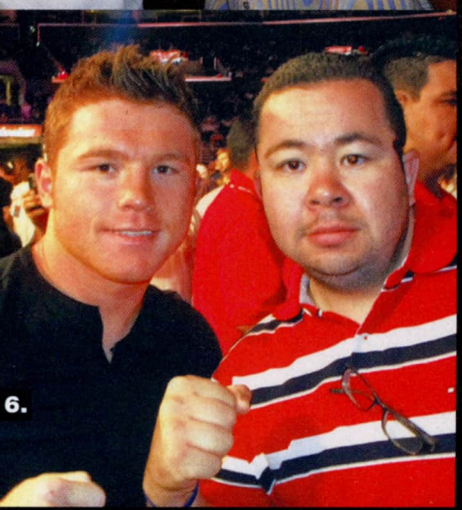
THE RING will select a photo from its vast archive each month to publish in the magazine. For more archive photos, go to our Web site — RingTV.com — or scan the QR code.



1. Thirteen-year-old Veronica Aldana with Brandon Rios at the Garden City Boxing Club in Rios' hometown of Garden City, Kan., in November. 2. Lynsey Barron with Evander Holyfield at Atlanta Corporate Fight Night III in November in Atlanta. 3. Benny Arteaga with Julio Cesar Chavez after the Nonito Donaire-Toshiaki Nishioka card in October in Carson, Calif. 4. Vincent Sirianni with Floyd Mayweather Sr. in Las Vegas. 5. Ray Doemer (center) with Dicky Ecklund (left) and Micky Ward at the International Boxing Hall of Fame in Canastota, N.Y. 6. Jesus Cruz with Canelo Alvarez at the Victor Ortiz-Josesito Lopez card in June in Los Angeles.







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